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WESTERN AMERICANA

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ILLINOIS AND THE WEST.

WITH

A TOWNSHIP MAP,

CONTAINING THE

LATEST SURVEYS AND IMPROVEMENTS.

BY A. D. JONES.

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Ill?
HISTORICAL
SURVEY

INTRODUCTION.

I have been induced to give the following pages to the public from a strong desire to give a correct impression on the public mind of things pertaining to the West, and particularly of that portion of the West embraced in Illinois. Various and contradictory reports of this land are in circulation throughout the Eastern and Middle States, and which are well calculated to puzzle and mislead the inquiring immigrant. The purpose of these pages is to disabuse the public mind of these false impressions. Having *seen* and *heard* what I have *written*, and having withal taken the best advice with men upon the spot, I feel that I can confidently rely on my little book's being received as, at least, a correct and impartial directory.

The "Appendix" has been collated with great care from the best sources, and many important corrections and additions that no other *published* statistics contain. The Map has been drawn from the best authorities, and contains surveys and improvements never before published, and may be relied on as more accurate than any other map extant.

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CHAPTER I.

Reason for writing — Best route to New York — Odious monopoly between New York and Philadelphia — Railroad accident — Comfort on a Canal Boat — Portage Railroad — River and Mountain Scenery — Pittsburg.

STEAMBOAT MAINE, OHIO RIVER,
MAY 14, 1838.

HAVING promised an occasional sketch from my pen during my absence from home, I seize the first moment of leisure that has presented itself since my departure, to redeem the pledge. On ground that has been so often traversed, and so repeatedly described, it cannot be expected that I should find much that is new or striking; but there is, doubtless a large portion of your community, to whom, if they be not *new*, my *sketches* may be interesting. Besides, on leaving New England, I was besought on all sides, to write concerning the "land of promise," towards which

I had set my face; and these general epistles will serve the purpose of numerous private ones — thus saving me much time and labor. Again, there is an increasing desire at the East, to know more about this great valley of the West, and every thing relating to it is eagerly read; and it is desirable that men of different pursuits and tastes should give their individual impressions, that from the whole, a somewhat correct opinion may be formed of the various characteristics of the soil, climate, society, &c., of the West.

Nor shall I write these notes by the way, as a traveller, but as a citizen. They will be *miscellaneous*, and will be filled with matter relating to things in general; and the circumstance of their being filled while on the wing, will, I trust, be sufficient apology for their extempore, unpolished character.

I took the Stonington route to New York—a new one to me—which I found both pleasant and comfortable, and should certainly recommend it to persons travelling from Boston to New York. I considered myself fortunate in falling in with two old friends on the way,—

a circumstance which served, in no small degree, to banish the uncomfortable reflection, that every evolution of the clanking machinery bore me farther from my family and the land of my nativity. I wish I could say any thing in favor of the travelling accommodations between New York and Philadelphia ; but conscientiously I cannot ; and as I hate grumbling on the road, I shall say nothing on this point, *only* that a most odious monopoly exists there, which insults, at will, the whole public, and imposes beyond patient endurance upon the traveller whose ill fortune it may be to be thrown within their merciless grasp.

At Philadelphia, we took the cars for Harrisburg, where we were to strike the eastern terminus of the Susquehannah Canal. At West Chester, about 16 miles from Philadelphia, the locomotive ran against a dearborn containing a man wholly unconscious of the danger he was in. The cars were going at the rate of twenty miles an hour, and the concussion was of course terrific. The horse was killed, and terribly mangled, the dearborn crushed to atoms, and the man thrown upon the track, and the wheels of the engine, tender, and one car passed over his right leg, literally crushing it to atoms. It was a horrible sight, and the whole of the passengers seemed to be utterly dumbfounded. The suffering man was soon drawn out and disentangled from the wreck of his carriage, and was fast bleeding to death, yet no one stepped forth to his help. I immediately went to his aid, examined the limb, applied a tourniquet, and aided him to a house near the spot, where he was comfortably provided for, until the surgeon should arrive. I heard from him the day after—he was doing well. By this time the engine and tender, which were thrown from the track were restored, and we resumed our saddened way.

At Harrisburg we took the canal boat, and travelled at the rapid rate of three miles per hour. Our boat was calculated to accommodate *thirty* persons; we had *sixtyfive*—I leave it for you to judge of our comfort, adding only, that a portion of our number were of the lowest grade, and were exceedingly offensive in person and language. I need not say here, that *whiskey* was at the bottom of our discomfort. There were, nevertheless, a few on board, whose society repaid for all our evils. At Holidaysburg, we left the boat, and entered the cars by which we were to be borne over the mountains.

The "Portage Railroad," over the Alleghanies, is a wonderful work, and exhibits in a surprising manner the amazing power of mind, and its vast superiority over the corporeal world. Here we were whirled over a a high, rugged mountain, whose toilsome and dangerous ascent and descent, it but yesterday required more *weeks*, than it now does *hours*. The road consists of five inclined planes on each side of the mountain with their levels. The planes are from three fourths of a mile to a mile and a quarter in length, and the levels from one to sixteen miles. The short levels are furnished with horse power, the longer ones with locomotives. The passage is perfectly safe—so it appeared to me—and is full of interest. The scenery up the Juniata and Susquehannah had been wild and beautiful, but here it invested itself with the awful and sutpendous. Now we were drawn up an inclination of thirtyfive degrees, at the rate of seven or eight miles per hour, by a single cord, and an entirely invisible power; now were descending from our giddy elevation at the same rate, and anon winding our crooked way along some deep defile, or on the edge of some beetling crag that overhung an abyss which made the head swim that dared to glance below. On either hand, peak towered above peak, seemingly ambitious to overtop each other, sending back from their rugged sides, the echo, ten thousand times reduplicated, of the shrill and affrighting note of our steam-whistle, which it was necessary to keep in perpetual play throughout that dangerous course. On the summit level we dined—or rather went through the ceremony of eating, and paid for it very liberally. The amount of transportation on this railway is immense. There are two tracks, and the engines are in continual operation. As one set of cars pass up, another attached to the same rope, (which moves like an endless chain, up one track and down the other) passes down and there is no cessation. It seems to me that when business is brisk, it can by no means answer the demands that will be made upon it. At the head of the last inclined plane on the west side, we passed through the bowels of the mountain by a beautiful tunnel, which added to the variety and gave life to the scene. Once more packed in our canal boat, we floated down the Conemaugh, (the largest of the head waters of the Ohio, and which rises near the spot where we dined, and where it would have run through a gallon keg,) the Kiskiminitis, and the Alleghany rivers to Pittsburgh, where we arrived on Saturday evening, the fourth day from Philadelphia—albeit the agent promised us a passage of but sixty hours. The scenery down these rivers is exceedingly beautiful, and needed only the robe of spring to render it perfectly enchanting. But winter reigned among these hills, and scarce a green thing appeared for a hundred miles together.

An observant mind will discover in every place some peculiar provision of the great Creator for its necessities. Salt is one of the most necessary articles of life, and were the vast country in this region dependent on the Atlantic shores for this indispensable conservative, it must be procured at great toil and greater cost. But here, the All-wise has hidden the secret springs of life and health, and its inhabitants have but to sink a shaft from one hundred to two hundred feet, and obtain the purest salt water. All along the banks of these rivers we beheld these salt wells, with their steam engines pumping up the water into reservoirs where it was evaporated by fire. Here, too, beside these springs, in the mountain's side, protruding even to the surface, are exhaustless mines of bituminous coal, easily wrought, with which their fires are fed. Such is the command these salt works have over the market, that they can easily bring down the price of salt to one dollar, and even less, per barrel, at Pittsburgh.

We entered Pittsburg over the Alleghany river, by a splendid viaduct, thirty feet above the surface of the river. As it was dark we lost the view of the city and its environs, which from that point is said to be very fine. In the morning I took a ramble on the wild hills which skirt the turbid Monongahela, and was enchanted with one of the most unique and varied prospects on which I ever gazed, out of which rises in the midst, this city of smoke and machinery, whose noise and stygian odors penetrate the senses even at the highest altitudes of those towering bluffs.

No one can look upon the locality of Pittsburg for an instant and not be convinced of its commanding position. Situated at the confluence of the Monongahela and Alleghany rivers, whose junction forms the head of the Ohio, it must forever be a mighty thoroughfare through which the tide of immigration and business must pour with continual increase while our institutions continue. Nor in a commercial point of view alone is it important. To the Christian there is a *moral* relation between Pittsburg and the far West, which magnifies exceedingly the importance of this station. It appears to me that no small pains or expense should be incurred by the philanthropic to cause a healthful influence to go out therefrom into the fertile, but morally sterile, valleys which lie beyond.

CHAPTER II.

Sail down the Ohio River—Morals and Lynch Law at the West—Cincinnati—Wreck of the Moselle.

St. Louis, Mo. May 24, 1836.

I embarked in the steamboat Maine, Capt. Crawford, for St. Louis, and left Pittsburg at 2 o'clock, P. M. on Monday, 14th inst. The Maine is a new boat, with state-rooms throughout, and a fine boat in all its appointments. The captain is an accommodating, gentlemanly fellow, and being a large owner, keeps a vigilant eye on the whole concern. His pilots and engineers are sober, faithful men, and the passengers may rely on safety, as far as it depends on them. I would recommend to any of my eastern friends who are coming out here, to inquire for the Maine. Our sail down the Ohio was as delightful as a combination of pleasant circumstances could make it. The day was the first perfect spring-day I had seen this season, and the fields and forests on the river's side, had already begun to assume their summer garb, and were vocal with the music of their feathered tenants. I had often heard the praises of this majestic river sung, and had curbed my expectations lest I should be disappointed. The Ohio is a beautiful river. There are points on the Hudson and Connecticut, and other rivers of the East, which equal any thing I saw on the Ohio; but its peculiarity is that it is *all* beautiful. There are no points here of beauty; but every mile is as rich in scenery as it was in verdure at the time of my passage down its "winding way." Notwithstanding the country in the neighborhood of this stream has long been settled, yet there are but few towns on the river's bank, or indeed improvements of any kind, and, with the exception of here and there a break made by such as furnish the steamboats with fuel, the aboriginal forest bounded the prospect on either side. This is owing to its liability to inundation at the season of the annual flood.

The peculiar and various craft which plied up and down the Ohio, at the time of Mr Flint's first descent, have entirely disappeared, with the exception of the flat-bottomed boat and raft. These, indeed, we passed in great numbers, but they never, as formerly, return. At the mouth of the river, they are broken up and taken to St. Louis, or float on, down the Mississippi to New Orleans. We hauled up alongside one of these floating fields of timber, near the mouth of the Ohio, which afforded a study to any one disposed to look at nature and man under every new aspect that presents itself to him on his passage through life. I shall speak of this more particularly in its place.

At almost every considerable place on the river, we stopped a short time to discharge or take in passengers or freight. I availed myself of these occasions to go on shore and take a bird's-eye view of the towns and people thereof. Many of the towns I found beautiful; and in all of them I witnessed the supremacy of the utilitarian spirit, which, while it is rearing towns and villages all over the wilderness west, is but too careless of the moral growth. The amount of grog-shops which curse every western town and city, would astonish every man from New England. As far as my knowledge extends, I do not think the average high, when I say, that in towns in every eighth, and in cities in every twelfth tenement, ardent spirit is an article of traffic. What can be expected of the morals of the west? And yet, in justice I must acknowledge, that I have not seen half a dozen men drunk since I left Boston. Nor do I think that the tone of morality is at such low ebb as we have been accustomed to suppose. Indeed, in society, embracing not only the upper, but middling classes, there is a high standard of morality; and gross violations thereof are by no means winked at. True, it is more chivalrous than christian, but it embraces the fundamental principles of honor, patriotism, integrity and charity. We find here *the best materials to work upon*; rude and unrefined, they may be, but containing the elements of the best social organization.

Nor do the tidings of violence and wrong which are daily wafted to our ears from this far land, check my confidence in the redeeming virtue of the west. We abuse ourselves when we take these rough samples as specimens of the western character. We ought to reflect that the strange, and the cruel, and the bloody, are far more likely to reach us than the good, which is less notorious because it is less strange. And the reign of Lynch law here, is, by no means, to be taken as evidence of the *lawlessness* of the land, but otherwise. The country is large, wild, young, and sparsely settled, and it is, in many cases, exceedingly difficult to obtain justice at all; and it is, nine cases in ten, only a sense of justice that erects this extra-judicial tribunal, whose decisions, however opposed to Coke and Blackstone, are generally such as these eminent jurists would have legally sanctioned. I say nothing for Lynch law — utterly and evermore do I condemn it — but I do say that the specimens of which the west has been the theatre, do not, in my estimation, lower the standard of morality there, but the reverse: they find *some* apology in the circumstances alluded to above. In the east, where the law is a perfect machine, working with exact nicety, at all times, and penetrating all the ramifications of society, it is entirely a different thing. The burning of the Charlestown convent was ten thousand times more atrocious than the burning of a negro over a slow fire at St. Louis; not intrinsically, but because of the more thorough organization of society, and the higher tone of morals prevailing at the east. I do not say that there is not a favorable comparison to be made between New England and the west, in point of morals, in behalf of the former, yet, I can but think there is a more unfavorable impression existing among us respecting western morality than an examination into the subject will warrant. These are my "first impressions," and I feel bound to give them publicity, because, in common with all Yankees, I have thought and spoken unjustly of this great and growing people. I may be deceived, and a longer residence here may disclose more of the depravity of the west, but I have charity to think less evil of my western brethren the more I see of them. This much I think I may safely say of the west; an upright, industrious, civil man has nothing to fear from fraud, injustice, or Judge Lynch — a knave, every thing.

We reached Cincinnati in exactly fortyeight hours from Pittsburg. We remained here until the next morning, which afforded me a fine opportunity to examine this "Queen City of the West." Among other places I visited the wreck of the ill-fated Moselle. It was a wreck indeed, one awful evidence among the many of the terrible power which lies buried in the bosom of each of the thousand boats which float on these mighty rivers, and which through the pride or carelessness, or malignity of one man, may belch forth their "deaths innumerable and miseries infinite." And yet it is astonishing how our familiarity with danger diminishes our fears. I know not but, after the first day, I trod the planks of our boat as securely and carelessly as the floor of my own quiet parlor. The explosion of the Moselle created a tremendous excitement, and produced a decided effect for good on the managers of steamboats. It was a general remark of those who were accustomed to travel up and down these rivers, that they had never seen boats managed so prudently as at the present time. The fact that the greatest waste of life occurs among the officers and hands of the boats, does much to insure safety to the passengers, especially when we reflect that nearly all accidents occur through sheer carelessness or wilfulness. On the Moselle, the captain, mate, one clerk, both engineers, both pilots (every boat has a double set) and every hand were destroyed. Only a clerk escaped.

CHAPTER III.

St. Louis—Immigration—Farmers Immigrating—Encampment on the Prairie—Rapid growth of trees—Debarcation of a raft at the mouth of the Ohio—Timber at the West.

ALTON, ILLINOIS, JUNE 3, 1838.

ST. LOUIS is the great starting point of the west. Hither from every quarter of the east and south, travellers and immigrants flock in uncounted numbers. Every hour of every day they are disembogued upon the beautiful levee of this city in scores on scores, seeking pleasure and a home in this wondrous world just opening to them. From hence, every hour of every day witnesseth their departure; into the interior of Missouri, up the Mississippi, Missouri or Illinois rivers, to the vast region of country which these streams pass through. An eastern man can have no idea of the tide of travel on these mighty waters, which are perpetually agitated with the paddles of those vast floating palaces vulgarly named steamboats, every one of which is freighted with men, women and children, seeking a new home in this new world, and the *multitude* of which would actually astonish you as it has, oftentimes, me. And, perhaps, not half the tide of immigration pours through these channels. Hosts of farmers with their families make their way across the country in every direction, in their own private conveyances. Already have I passed many a cavalcade of this kind, which has at once amused and astonished me. Would that I held the graphic pen of an Irving:—then would I sketch one of these *sui generis* cavalcades. Imagine one of those "low, long, rakish," wagons, peculiar to western Pennsylvania, drawn by from four to six noble horses, the near pole horse mounted by a ruddy, stalwart and happy fellow, whistling on his way, and keeping time with the crack of a whip which reaches the farthest horse in the team, and which no novice arm could wield, the stock of which is at least ten feet in length, with a corresponding extension of lash. In the small, puckered opening of the canvass in front, some half dozen faces peer out, of all sizes and of each sex. Prominent among this huddled group is the broad and complacent physiognomy of the lord of the establishment, rejoicing in a width of brim which bids defiance to the rays of an almost vertical sun, and inhaling from a pipe of such figure and dimensions as utterly to defy description, long, sweet, and composing draughts of the "care-banishing narcotic." Pacing on before, or capering across the prairie, you behold the elder sons and daughters mounted each on a nag of noble blood, with an occasional foal trotting beside, whose business it is, not only to keep along on the way, but to care for and direct the movements of as motley a group as entered the ark of the patriarch. Next kine, a score, of as many colors as the "ringed, streaked and speckled" kine of the banished Israelites: swine, as many, red, black, white and assorted, and a few fine, large sheep, with a sprinkling of colts, compose this nondescript gathering. Then put in single file some ten or twenty of these "families," and you have some idea of the imposing spectacle. But you should see all this motley multitude, just as they have encamped for the night. Horses, cattle, dogs, hogs and sheep spread over the prairie far and wide; the wagons at convenient distance and grouped in a most neighborly method, each with its cheerful camp fire blazing, and its camp-kettle sending forth its grateful steam and appetite-quickening odor, round which you behold the female inmates of each family busily engaged in supper preparations. Meanwhile the men liberate their dusty teams, and after rubbing them down, turn them loose upon the rich and unfenced pastures, or grease their axles, and repair any injuries sustained by the rough usage of the wilderness roads over which they have made, it may be, a hazardous and dangerous way. To fill up the picture, scores of happy children, glad to escape the dull monotony of their slow and toilsome march, mingle in clans, capering and shouting on the beautiful level, plucking the thousand wild flowers which bedeck their playground, or rolling in very plenary of joy on the luxuriant carpet which covers the whole space for many a mile around.

These are *colonies*, who take out with them all the necessary articles of housekeeping which are not easily obtained in a new and unsettled country, with plenty of cash to enter land and procure what they need, but cannot take along with them. When they find a place suited to their wants, and corresponding to their wishes, they make a halt, take immediate measures to secure the land, erect their cabins, plough their land, and find themselves at once at home. The edge of a prairie is generally selected, near the timber or "oak openings," as they are called, where wood for every purpose may easily be obtained. The soil generally is better in proportion as you penetrate the prairie, and immigrants are just beginning to make the discovery that the central ground of a prairie, provided it be not too far from wood for *present* purposes, is altogether the best for cultivation, beauty of location and health. I say wood for "*present*" purposes; for if a settler can but supply his immediate wants, he may plant and speedily obtain a forest in his immediate domain. The rapid growth of fruit and forest trees is indeed wonderful. I was recently at a new settlement in the midst of a large prairie about sixteen miles from Alton, to which from its altitude they have given the patriotic name of Bunker Hill. I saw in that lovely spot, locust trees, just two years from the seed twelve to fifteen feet high, and eight inches in circumference. I saw there, peach trees three years from the seed, loaded with fruit, some of which I should think would yield bushels; and apple trees, four years old from the seed, bearing a little fruit. In six years a farmer may raise from the seed a forest which will meet every want. The locust tree is found to be very easily wrought, and to possess a durability which few western trees do. But I intend speaking more largely on this point elsewhere and now pass it by.

Besides the modes of immigration above described, there are others by which thousands every year are transferred to the West. I mean the raft and flat boat. Down all the streams which feed the Ohio, float daily immense rafts of timber and flat boats, peopled with immigrants. These sail down the current to the mouth of the Ohio, and there they are broken up, put on board steamboats and taken to St. Louis, from whence their contents are distributed over all the country, and the people thereof seek their destination by the usual methods. It was my good fortune to witness the debarcation of one of these rafts. It occurred at mid-day on the Sabbath, within a few miles of the mouth of the river. It consisted of three distinct rafts, lashed together for mutual aid and convenience, making one grand concern, of about two hundred feet in length and about sixty wide. At each end, were three immense oars, or rudders, by which the unwieldy mass was guided. On this raft were several families, with every appointment of the western immigrant. In the centre stood a rude but comfortable shantee, at once a parlor, kitchen, bedroom and storehouse. The funnel of a capital cook-stove pierced the rough roof, and the outsides of its walls were hung with a mixed tapestry of meats, sporting apparatus, and every variety of male and female wearing apparel. Its interior I did not see, but judging from the many articles of convenience and even luxury which issued therefrom in its evacuation—a process which I witnessed with peculiar emotions—there must have been no small share of real comfort and enjoyment within those rude walls, during the three long weeks of their tortuous passage from the head waters of the Monongahela. Horses, dogs, ploughs, wagons, the anvil, bellows and other appurtenances of a smithy, and every implement of husbandry, were scattered about in wild disorder. Twenty men, half as many women, with a due proportion of children, all neatly clad in their Sunday suit, and apparently quite intelligent, comprised the reasoning portion of this wonder. Their unlading and embarkation on board our boat, was to me a novel, picturesque and impressive sight. Oh, how I longed for the pencil of a Hogarth, that I might transmit to paper that interesting scene! There lay that giant raft, tethered to the roots of the tall, dark cottonwood trees that spread their thick branches quite across it, like some dreamy sleeper unconscious of all the bustle on its ample back. The thick canebrake on shore swarmed with the numerous passengers who were glad of a chance to set foot on land, and the natives who had come to witness the scene, who were calling to each other in cheerful tones, from the midst of the tangled cane, and answered by the shrill bark and howl of the canine sharers in the sport. At length the last article was safely deposited, the bell warned those on shore of our readiness to depart, the last straggler crossed the plank when it was drawn in, and the word heartily given, "all right," the boat swung round and fell into the current, and with a farewell puff from our steam pipe, and a cheer from the three young men left on the raft to break it up, we once more ploughed our rapid way.

The raft was composed entirely of pine plank and shingles, and was variously estimated at from five to fifteen thousand dollars, when it should reach St. Louis. Pine timber grows no where at the West, until you reach the extreme upper waters of the Mississippi; consequently, it bears a very high price and finds a ready market. The cottonwood, lynn and cypress are here the only substitutes which I have seen, and which are found only on the heavy bottoms of the rivers. Their texture is very similar to our bass and white poplar, and can easily be wrought into smoothness. Black walnut abounds here, and is generally used for boards for covering houses, and for fences ; but its rich and variegated surface is generally covered up with a rascally coat of whitewash or paint. But the oak—king of the forest—is the staple article of lumber, and most generally used, where we in the east use the white pine. There are here also, the maple and white walnut, (butternut,) which are partially used for these purposes. The growth of wood is very rapid, and consequently it is less hard and durable, as well as more easily wrought. For ininstance, black walnut is as readily wrought as northern pitch, or hard pine.

CHAPTER IV.

Mississippi River—Missouri River—Waters of the Missouri medicinal—Bluffs and bottoms on the Mississippi—Scene by moonlight.

ALTON, ILLINOIS, JUNE 7, 1836.

I LEFT St. Louis in the steam-packet Eagle on Monday, May 27, and made the trip to Alton in four hours. Distance twentyfive miles. I am thus particular, that my readers may have some idea of the rapidity of the current in the Mississipi. The Eagle is one of the swiftest boats on the river, and often accomplishes the downward trip in half the time it requires to ascend the same distance. Indeed, the river, below the mouth of the Missouri, is one continuous succession of rapids. The water boils, and surges, and eddies as if it were passing over a wild and rocky bed, whose rough points project near the surface, instead of a smooth and muddy bottom, with scarcely any where, except on the sandbars, less than ten, and often more than fifty feet of water. Above the mouth of the Missouri the river becomes more placid and its current much less rapid, although it is even here a bold and rapid stream. The Missouri, as every school-boy knows, after the Ohio, is the largest tributary to the father of waters, larger, indeed, than the main branch which retains its name. The Missouri is an anomaly among rivers. For thousands of miles it pursues its eccentric course, pouring its turbulent and muddy waters through a vast and various region, wild and beautiful as itself, swallowing up many large streams in its course, yet scarcely by them all, diluted from its thick, milk-colored consistence, which it not only retains throughout all its sinuous course, but which in the might of its sway, it separately maintains, for a long course in conjunction with the Mississippi, and infuses itself throughout the whole stream, and gives the color and character to that mighty river, until it is swallowed up by the sea. And, indeed, it seems to struggle hard for its independence even here; coloring, as it does, the waters the gulf for many a league beyond its confluence.

It was interesting as it was wonderful to us, as we crossed and re-crossed the stream on our upward way, to mark the exact line of separation between these two rival rivers. Side by side they flow on in their individual independence, each seeming unwilling to assimilate with the other, and striving to oust each other from the course—the clear waters of the Mississippi slightly tinged with green, glancing from its bright surface the rainbow sparkles of sunlight, more brillant than any gems ; and the Missouri, dull, stern, opaque, beautiful but in its awful grandeur, tumbling on its wild way as if conscious of the respect it receives, and its superiority to its rival, which, ere long, is destined to be vanquished, and all its bright and beautiful hues swallowed up in its own dark and beauty-defacing waters. The water of the Missouri is esteemed by the people residing on its banks, and those of the Mississippi, a great luxury, and is much prefered, in all its muddiness, to the clearest spring-water. It is said to be much more healthy ; and many affirm that it is a sovereign remedy for dispepsy. It has a very palatable taste, when iced, to a stranger, even, and when he has overcome his repugnance to its color and consistency, he prefers it to the more limpid water of the Mississippi. On unacclimated persons it acts as a powerful purgative, and produces, unless checked, great depletion. But on the resident it operates as a gentle and agreeable aperient. When the river is high, as in a freshet, the water is very thick and white, being full of exceedingly fine white sand which it has brought from the upper regions of Missouri; but it readily settles when at rest — which is greatly aided by a little corn-meal thrown into it — and becomes comparatively clear, appearing as if it were slightly tinged with milk.

Above the mouth of the Missouri, the Mississippi is changed to a comparatively placid stream, and to my apprehension, a much more beautiful one. From the mouth of the Ohio on the Illinois side up to Alton, with one or two exceptions, there is an unbroken wild of timber. This is the far-famed "American bottom," so rich and exhaustless in its soil, but so deleterious in its climate as to be utterly uninhabitable save by those born upon the spot. This bottom is from a mile to seven and eighth in width, and consequently, utterly defies the discovery of the beautiful bluffs beyond, by the passers up and down the river. This continuous waste of forest, with its trees kissing the very wave, this dull, unvarying monotony wearies the eye, and gives a stranger the idea, that the whole country below St. Louis, is an unbroken and uninhabitable level —a more incorrect conclusion than which, as the sequel of these letter will show, could not have been formed.

On the Mississippi side, on the contrary, there are continual approaches of the bluffs to the very bank of the river. These bluffs are composed of limestone, and often tower perpendicularly to the height of a hundred feet. They assume all imaginable forms, and the irregularity of the various layers of these immense piles of rock, almost forces the conclusion, that the masonry is of earthly design and execution. In some places immense pillars of regular form and masonry rise to a great height, and seem designed for the base of some stupendous fabric not yet completed, or else which is frittered away by the wearing passage of time, until it has disappeared forever; or overthrown by some mighty convulsion — not mighty enough to remove the base, eternally anchored — its ruins have been swept away by the devouring current which rolls resistlessly at their feet. Sometimes the tops are crowned with a lofty growth of timber, among which the *buzzards* build their nests, far out of the reach of men. From these giddy eyries, startled by the puffing of our laboring boat, they wheeled beautifully out in scores to give us a passing look, and stooping often to take a nearer survey — even then far beyond the reach of the many shot that were sent after them by several sportsmen on board, and at which they did not flutter a feather — they rose majestically and swept away to their inaccessible hiding places. Many of these rocky prominences were partially crowned with shrubs and flowers — others naked as the rock of Gibraltar, with rude shot-towers on the top. At the time we sailed up the river, our eyes were regaled with the thousand hues of the countless wild flowers which luxuriated in the clefts of the rock far out of the reach of mortal hand, or the rude hoof of the grazing cattle which sometimes peered at us from the top of the precipice which was level with the rich and boundless pastures through which they range at will. Among others I discovered three varieties of phlox, the showy scarlet fireweed, the splendid tradescantia, and the yellow and white moccassin flower, the latter the most beautiful of the floral tribe.

Occasionally were to be seen, between the openings of the bluffs, small prairies already cultivated, from which the ground rose in gentle acclivity to the top of the bluffs, affording the most lovely spots for human habitation. These sites, interspersed with lofty trees, so beautiful and fitting for a HOME, so rich and fertile, and withal so healthy and so full of all natural delights, are, most of them, but the resting place of those "cattle upon a thousand hills," which screen themselves in the luxuriant shade from the scorching beams of an almost vertical sun. A few of these have been already seized on by men of wealth and taste, and before many years they will all become the delightful centres of home-attractions, and spots of loveliness on the shore of this rolling flood of waters.

Above the mouth of the Missouri the bluffs change to the opposite shore, and the same dull, level bottom prevails upon the Missouri side, which has so long wearied the eye upon the Illinois side. Alton is situated at the foot of and upon the first bluffs on this side of the river; and from thence up far above the mouth of the Illinois river, they continue in their broken and unequalled beauty. Nothing of the kind can exceed the solemn beauty and grandeur of those rugged highlands when seen from the river by moonlight. I have sat for hours upon the *rear* guard of our creeping boat to gaze at their illusive beauties. It requires no poet's imagination to people them with light and life, with form and color. Nay, it requires a sterner philosophy than I possess to rob them of their ideal charm, and to resolve all that scene of constantly changing beauty and of life, to piles of dull, insensate limestone. No, no. Sunlight might have dissipated the "dear, delusive dream," but that false, fickle light, "reflected, not originated," — pale, thin, impalpable — forbade the sacrilegious thought, that those beauteous temples, domes, spires and turrets, were aught else than the visioned things they seemed. No wonder that the now banished Indian, filled these heaven-struck temples with the bones of their fallen, when their silent canoe glided down this stream so noiselessly, that the sleeping swan was undisturbed by the paddle's dip, and the unaffrighted deer drank from its limpid wave in conscious security. No wonder that they peopled these wild caves with spirits of the air and of their departed braves. How many a wild shriek has rung through these tessellated arches as the husband and father was borne thither from the gory field of fight and fame! How have those wild rocks been wet with the maternal tear, and their echoes broken with the lover's sad lament! Are ye not peopled, ye deep and solemn aisles? Dressed up in your wild and gorgeous beauty, are ye not animate with the thoughts and doings which never die? And was I wrong, when, from thy pillared courts, bursts of sweet music, such as earthly harps never emit and mortal voices never chant, seemed to float around, above, below, and fill my soul with peace and heaven? Away, thou dull philosophy, that fain would rob us of these "angel visits," and make all the scenes of this work-day world, dark and thorny as its sun-lit paths!

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CHAPTER V.

Tradition of the Piasau Bird—Legendary lore of the West—The West once occupied by a race of giants—A race of pigmies—Strange beasts and birds—Appearance of the Piasau Bird—Description of it—Origin of its name—Fearful destruction by it—Its death.

ALTON, ILLINOIS, JUNE 10, 1838.

I SPOKE, in my last, of the curious legendary lore which one has doled out to him by the "old settlers" of the West. Much of this is singularly enough connected with a most antique race of men, unlike and superior to the red men, and speaks of a time and age greatly superior to the present in its physical organization—when the men were Anakims, and the behemoth strode over these prairies, monarch of the plains. What are the men of this pigmy age to the colossal warriors of those undegenerate times—our Lilliputian beasts to the monstrous and *outre* extraversions of those fecund eras? Strange men and stranger beasts occupied this fertile vale, and of all the wild and wonderful adventure of that unwrought age, eternal silence claims the whole, save here and there a dreamy legend, growing out of the imperishable mementoes they have left behind. I seem to behold, as I look back through the mist of the past, a fearful void — waste on waste and darkness unrelieved — with here and there a projecting point, misshapen and scarcely real, — yet full of fearful beauty and strange deformity. Innumerable mounds of earth, cast up with wonderful care and toil, of various dimensions and shapes, plainly the work of man's hands, from which, from time to time, have been disembowelled relics of an unknown and nearly civilized race — caverns in the rugged and beautiful bluffs which hang over all the wild rivers of the West, full of the bones of a triple race of giants, dwarfs and men of common stature, and of beasts such as are now extinct, curious in their form and gigantic in their proportions — those huge and misshapen fragments of granite, called boulders, scattered sparsely enough over those boundless champagnes, placed there, *sans doubte*, by human exertion, for some, to us, unimaginable purposes —

skeletons of the mastodon and behemoth, dug out from surprising depths below the present surface of the soil — these, with the legends of animals belonging to no known tribes or races, monstrous abortions of nature — fish, fowl and beast, commingled in hideous proportions — all, all amuse and confound, baffle conjecture and bar all access to those arcana, so rich in hidden knowledge, so impenetrable to human ken! What a strange world we live in, and how insignificant the part we individually act therein. What an untold, unimaginable tale of other times should we read, could we but explore the sealed pages of the past! And yet the future may be as monumentless of *our* times and acts, vaunted and puffed up as we are in our own imaginations, as the present of the past!

But what has all this to do with the tradition of the *Piasau Bird?* Much, as the sequel will show. It will serve to throw light upon the story, and give it substance, tangibility.

Time out of mind, the powerful tribe which dwelt in the region of country in the neighborhood of Alton, was called the Illini, or

Illinois, and from which the present state derives its name. This tribe extended far and wide, and numbered many thousand warriors whose valor and craftiness ensured them success over all their enemies. Their hunting grounds extended for many a league below and above the location of their city, which was situated upon the bold bluffs now resounding with the busy hum of life and labor from the growing city of Alton. Thence to the waters of the Wabash in the east, they held unlimited sway, and ranged the unbroken forests and unfenced prairies freely and fearlessly as the stag and buffalo which they hunted. There they lived and triumphed, multiplying and increasing in wealth and power, fearless of invasion and commanding the respect and exciting the envy of each lesser tribe around. No warriors so brave, no horses so beautiful and fleet, no hosts so invincible, as those of the Illinois.

In the midst of their prosperity, in the reign of the illustrious Owatoga, chief to this warlike tribe — whose name to this day is uttered with the profoundest reverence by every

Indian warrior, and whose virtue and noble daring they emulate — many, many hundred moons before the oars of the white man dipped in the curling wave of the "Father of Waters," they were terrified with a fearful visitation from the Great Spirit. There appeared upon the inaccessible bluffs, where it made its home, an immense and hideous animal, half bird, half beast, which, from the circumstance of its having wings, they called the Piasau Bird. This name, like all Indian names, is significant of the character of the monster which it designates — it means "*the man-destroying Bird.*" This bird is described as being of gigantic size, capable of bearing off with ease in its talons, a horse or buffalo. Its head and beak were like those of a vulture, with eyes of the most dazzling brilliancy; its wings black as the raven and clothed with thunder, making a most fearful noise in its heavy flight; its legs, four in number, and talons like those of a mighty eagle; its body similar to that of a dragon, ending with a tail of huge dimensions like to a scorpion. Its body was gorgeously colored with every hue, and in its flight it made a most imposing spectacle, inspiring terror, awe and wonder. Such was this strange visiter who had taken up its abode in their sacred cliffs; and while their priests were studying the omen, whether it should be for good or for evil, all doubt was dissipated by the sudden descent of the bird into their midst, which seized one of their bravest warriors in its talons and bore him as a prey to its wild eyrie in the rocks. Never again was the unfortunate victim seen by his friends. But the sacrifice was not complete. Brave after brave, and women and children not a few, were borne off in succession by the fierce devourer, whose appetite seemed but to be whetted to a keener set, the more it tasted of human blood.

Such was the fearful state of things, when the brave Owatoga, chief of this mighty tribe, sought out his priests, and with them retiring to a secret place, fasted many days, and with all the mummery of their religion, sought the will of the Great Spirit. At length, in a trance, it was revealed to Owatoga, that the terrible visitant, who had hitherto eluded their utmost sagacity, might be destroyed. The mode was this. First, a noble victim was to be selected from among the bravest warriors of the tribe, who by religious rites was to be sanctified for the sacrifice. Secondly, twenty, equally as brave, with their stoutest bows and sharpest arrows, were to conceal themselves near the spot of sacrifice. The victim was to be led forth, and singly to take his stand upon an exposed point of the rock, where the ravenous bird would be likely to note and seize upon him. At the moment of descent the concealed warriors were to let fly their arrows, with the assurance that he would fall.

On the day appointed, the braves, armed agreeably to the instructoin of the vision, safely reached their hiding place, which commanded a full view of the fatal platform. The name of the victim had been kept profoundly secret, up to the sacrificial hour. Judge, then, the consternation, when, dressed in his proudest robes, Owatoga appeared at the head of his tribe, himself the voluntary victim. The tears and shrieks of the women, and the expostulations of all his chiefs availed nothing; he was bent upon his solemn and awful purpose. "Brothers and children," he addressed them, waving his hand in which he held a short wand, and which procured for him instant and profound audience, "the Great Spirit is angry with his children. He hath sent us this scourge to punish us for our sins. He hath demanded this sacrifice. Who so fit as your chief? The blood of my heart is pure. Who will bring any charge against Owatoga? Many moons have I been your chieftain. I have led you to conquest and glory. I have but this sacrifice to make, and I am a free spirit. I am a dry tree, leafless and branchless. Soon shall I sink upon the wide prairie and moulder away. Cherish and obey the sapling that springs up at my root. May he be braver and wiser than his sire. And when the Great Spirit smiles upon you and delivers you, forget not the sacrifice of Owatoga. Hinder me not — I go forth to the sacrifice."

With a calm and proud bow walked forth the doomed leader of the mighty Illinis, and took his station on the appointed spot. Soon was the ill-omened bird seen hovering over the place, and after wheeling about for a few moments high above the head of the devoted chief, nearing at each gyration the unquailing victim, suddenly he came thundering down towards his prize. In an instant, the barbed arrows from twenty sure bows buried themselves to the feather in the body of the common foe, and he fell quivering and dead at the feet of the noble chieftain — himself escaping unscathed!

Unbounded joy and rejoicing succeeded the eventful day. Owatoga was borne to the council-room of the village in triumph, and each one gave himself up to the wild tumult of joy which everywhere prevailed. After due deliberation, it was determined to perpetuate the event by engraving the picture of the Piasau Bird upon the smooth-sided limestone cliffs, which tower above the river. There it was done, and stained with the fast and fadeless colors, whose subtle compounding the Indian only knows, and which remain plainly visible to the present day. The spot became sacred from that time, and no Indian ascended or descended the Father of Waters for many a year without discharging his arrow at the image of the warrior-destroying Bird. After the distribution of fire-arms among the Indians, bullets were substituted for arrows, and even to this day no savage presumes to pass that magic spot without discharging his rifle and raising his shout of triumph. I visited the spot in June (1838) and examined the image, and the ten thousand bullet-marks upon the cliff seemed to corroborate the tradition related to me in the neighborhood. So lately as the passage of the Sac and Fox delegations down the river on their way to Washington, there was a general discharge of their rifles at the Piasau Bird. On arriving at Alton, they went on shore in a body, and proceeded to the bluffs, where they held a solemn war-council, concluding the whole with a splendid war dance, manifesting all the while the most exuberant joy.

This is the tradition of the "Piasau Bird," which seems to have been handed down from father to son through remote periods of antiquity. That such a monster ever existed, I cannot vouch—that its image is engraven upon the rock I know; and that the aforesaid monster should have existed in flesh and blood, is not more strange than other "real fictions" of this wonderful valley. But I give it to my readers as I found it—they must draw their own conclusions. It is, I think, worthy to be snatched from decay, and deserves to be recorded for the edification and instruction of the world. Tradition is the only history of those early times, and soon, in this utilitarian world, even these vestiges of a great and wonderful race will be swept into oblivion, if no one be found, with pious care, to rear them into a monumental pillar of history.

CHAPTER VI.

Illinois River—Peoria—Comfort on board a Steam Packet—Bribing the Steward—Deliverance of an Immigrating family at Naples—Extreme salubrity—A wise provision of Nature—The West destined to greatness.

PEORIA, ILLINOIS, JUNE 20, 1838.

I ARRIVED at Peoria, June 9, at three o'clock, A. M., in the steamboat Ashley, Capt. Sweeny. This is a new boat and a regular packet, plying between St. Louis and Peru once a week each way. Capt. S. is a very affable, courteous and careful boat-master, keeping a vigilant eye on every department of his boat; now giving orders to the fireman, now the engineer, anon the pilot, and then the hands. I have never seen a man more devoted to his business, and in whose hands I would sooner trust myself as the master of a boat on the western waters. I had waited at Alton during fortyeight long, weary hours for a boat bound up the Illinois river—many had passed bound up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers—when at last, late in the evening, just as I was about to abandon my post of watching for the night, the Ashley made her appearance, crowded with passengers, and loaded to the guards with freight. Several passengers were waiting, like myself, and the appearance presented on going aboard, was poorly calculated to give us any idea of comfort. We learned of course, that all the berths were long since taken up, and that we must take our chance with some sixty others at rough-and-tumble on the cabin floor. By a little management, and a bribe of a quarter-dollar to the steward — an important personage in such a case, and whose good will, once secured, well repays the cost — I obtained a snug corner, where with my saddle-bags for a pillow, I passed a tolerable night.

Previous to retiring, we were serenaded with several songs, by some three or four excellent voices. The effect of music in such a place and at such a time on the mind of one alive to the sweet influences of concordant sounds is indescribable. As I sat on the rail of the guard, and heard the sparkling and troubled water rushing beneath me, and cast my eyes upon the fairy and delusive spectacles of the limerock bluffs — elsewhere described in these letters — and listened to the old and familiar melodies, my heart melted within me, and all the harsh and jangling discordancy of life, seemed turned to harmony and peace.

"There's no place like Home!"

How did that truism, repeated for the millionth time, thrill through and through me, swelling and sounding in my inner ear, long after those vocal chords had died upon the waters, and no sound assailed the outward ear, save the clanking of the laboring engine, and heavy breathings of the sleepers around me!

At all the landings along the river, we put out freight or passengers, so that we were able to secure a comfortable berth for our second night and last on board the Ashley. At Naples and Meredosia we witnessed busy preparations for the construction of a railroad from each of these places across the country east to the Wabash. Large piles of lumber and rails lay upon the ground, the latter just discharged from a New Orleans boat. Naples is quite pleasantly situated, and must become a place of considerable importance from its proximity to Jacksonville and Springfield, the latter of which is to be the seat of government in 1840. I was much amused while watching the landing of a party of our passengers, immigrants from North Carolina. It consisted of two families, with every appurtenance of necessity and comfort. They were bound to a tract they had recently purchased in the neighborhood of Jacksonville. They were two noble, spirited bays, one of which fell overboard in landing him, and which could only be accomplished by backing him over the planks. Then there were a neat barouche, a buggy, a light wagon, and four farm wagons; each for two horses. Besides, there was a full compliment of "household stuff," among which I discovered a piano. Add to this, a year's stock of groceries, and other nicnacs of luxury, and a very vivid idea of comfort in their wilderness home was presented to one's mind. They appeared to be in high spirits, and an air of genteel breeding and intelligence gave the impression that the true *otium cum dignitate* was in store for these fortunate emigrants in this land of milk and honey — of fair skies and a balmy atmosphere. Our boat was speedily under way again, and as we passed our departed companions, we waved them a merry adieu, and wishing them all manner of happiness in their *new* home, we proceeded on our voyage.

We reached Peoria at daybreak, and were roused from our unquiet slumbers to go on shore. Here I left our thronged boat, which immediately proceeded on her way up the river to Peru and Hennipin, above which no boats run in the lower stages of the water. As I design to speak of *towns* in another chapter, I shall defer what I have to say of Peoria until then.

I believe I have elsewhere remarked, that nature seems to have been exceedingly lavish of her provisions for the comfort of man on this portion of the world. Certainly the orginal curse seems to have fallen here more lightly than upon any other portion of our earth I have seen or read of. There is here, in unequalled proportions, the richest variety of local inducements to the busy and restless spirit of man to plant himself and be at home. No richer soil, no blander climate, no greater variety of beautiful landscape, no more exhaustless mines of wealth and comfort beneath the soil, does any section of the same extent in the wide world afford. But all has not struck me more than the provision and foresight of nature in respect to this, the *El Dorado* of her demesnes. In all my course up the rivers of this country, I have admired the providing care of the great Creator, in the apparent evils which every immigrant has noticed. How often have I heard the remark of the traveller as he gazed upon the rank herbage of the rich bottoms, through which these mighty rivers sweep their resistless courses, "What a pity it is that these regions are so uninhabitable; that there is so much disease and death in these fertile bottoms." And such is the impression any one would receive who makes his way through the west only by her river courses. But let him reflect that were all the borders of these rivers healthy and habitable now, long ere this had they been occupied with that busy, intelligent, migrating race, who, for this reason, have been compelled to settle themselves abroad over these beautiful prairies and woodlands, and resort to measures from which are to spring, not only the wealth and physical power of this vast creation, but the moral impulses which are to guide her republican councils; to give vigor to her noble schemes of internal improvement; character to her generous educational provisions, and a higher and purer tone to her social and moral relations. Instead of a *thread* of civilization and improvement — doubtful in its moral tendencies, and depraved in its *physical* elements — seen here and there upon the mighty arteries of this vast body of life and light, we have the beautiful, moral picture of a vast multitude of sober, industrious, *primitive* husbandmen, scattered over the interior, pursuing their simple but profitable occupations, with far less temptation to sin and inducement to idleness. It is here, if any where, the *moral* impulse must be awakened and strengthened, and that too, before the soft luxuries of a prosperous commercial community shall disseminate their unnerving and licentious influences. Born and reared in these secluded homes of industry, economy and morality, the men who are destined to assume the control of the coming and eventful tide of affairs will grow hardy in integrity, and bring to their important duties a moral sense of right, which will augur well to the destinies of this great nation — especially to that portion of it which embraces these mighty and almost boundless savannahs.

In due time, the indomitable force of mind will conquer all the difficulties which now prevent the river settlements, and then we shall see a busy and hardy race swarming the borders of our streams, and sustained by the densely peopled back country, from which streams of life and wealth will pour through the whole extent of our country. For it is no idle dream, but the basis of a tangible reality, which holds forth this promise. Our country can never become so densely peopled, but that, with suitable culture, Illinois, with as large a tract of country on the opposite side of the Mississippi, can fully meet every demand made upon her granaries, provided agriculture were to be neglected every where else in our borders. But as I intend to enlarge upon this idea in another place, I shall for the present pass it over.

There can be no doubt but the diseases peculiar to these bottom lands owe their origin to something else than their proximity to the rivers, because there are spots on these very streams, not excelled for their healthful influences in the world. The unhealthiness of these portions of country arises from the decay of a superabundant vegetable growth. But when the foot of improvement shall have planted itself there firmly, having expelled the cause step by step as it approached, this evil will be overcome and a location on the banks of the Illinois or any of the western rivers, will be as healthy and safe as one among the annually shorn meadows of the beautiful Connecticut. Why not? Nothing can exceed the clearness and salubrity of the atmosphere on these rivers; stirred, as it is, through the live-long spring and summer, by the never-failing morning breeze, and purified by an almost unfailing evening thunder-shower, succeeding each other with nearly the same regularity that day succeeds to night.

Nor is the period spoken of so remote as may at first be imagined. A stranger, on going through the interior of this state, is struck, less with the natural wonders, which arrest his course at every step, than by the amount of country already occupied by flourishing residents. Go where he will, he can scarcely get out of sight of "improvements" —as they are technically called in the west —or the sound of new ones going on. Not only are the borders of the "timber" dotted with farms, but busy villages, and other farms are springing up in the very heart of the prairies, where not a tree or shrub, or even spring of water tempts the emigrant in his weary journey to encamp for a single night. And when we reflect that all this has been accomplished by the "magic of enterprise," and nearly all within a half dozen years, who shall say he shall not live to witness the fulfilment of the prophecy and gaze with his own eyes on the "Munchausen Vision," realized.

CHAPTER VII.

Tremont—Respect paid to the Sabbath—Temperance—Fourth of July—Stump Speeches—Barbecue in Missouri—False notions of Western Morality—Travellers—Acquaintance with the people affords a solution to enigmatical appearances—Apology for personal electioneering.

I REACHED Tremont, Wednesday morning before breakfast — having taken the stage for that purpose at Peoria — the 10th of June, and became immediately domiciliated in the "Tazewell Hotel," kept — and for a western tavern, remarkably well kept — by Capt. H. B. Sampson, a native of Duxbury, Mass., and for years a shipmaster from that port. I found several acquaintances here, by whom I was soon made acquainted with nearly the whole population of this social corporation.

Tremont, is the shire town for Tazewell county, and is situated in a delightful prairie, bounded on the east and south by a large belt of forest, on the Mackinau creek, and on the north and west, by another on Dillon's creek, and called "Pleasant Grove." The "timber" — as all forests are here called — is distant from the village, from one and a half to three miles, and is plainly visible on every hand from the point at which I am now writing. Tremont is on the east side of the Illinois river, and distant in a direct line about seven or eight miles. Pekin, nine miles distant, is the landing place for all merchandise coming up the river and destined for this place. Tremont is beautifully laid off in squares, with streets of an hundred feet in width, running at right angles with each other — parallel to the sectional lines by which the whole state is divided into townships and sections. In the centre of the town ten acres are thrown into a public square, with a broad street passing through its centre each way, cutting it into four equal sections. These are intended to be enclosed with a neat, white paling, which will no doubt be accomplished whenever the times improve. With a real public spirit which has marked nearly all the actions of this intelligent colony, they have planted ornamental trees along the lines of these squares, which already beautify, and will one day be a great ornament to the place. On all sides of this area, but chiefly on the western and northern sides, the dwellings, stores, offices, and workshops are scattered, giving the town an extended aspect entirely unlike anything at the east. The buildings are frame, and generally painted white, which gives an exceedingly neat and pleasant aspect, as contrasted with the deep and brilliant green of the prairie which embosoms it.

The character of the place is New England, there being three quarters of the population from that section of our country. There are besides a very intelligent class of citizens from New York, Kentucky, and other places in the Union, whose sectional feelings are all merged in the general interest. Indeed I have rarely ever witnessed less of this powerful influence than appears in this village. For a high moral tone of feeling, temperance, good order, industry, public spirit and real intelligence, I believe Tremont not to be surpassed in the whole west, and rarely equalled in our country towns at the east. A brisk business is here driven with the neighboring farmers, who have "located" themselves all along the line of the prairie in the edge of the "timber." One of the most pleasing features of this place is the respect paid by its inhabitants to sabbath institutions. There is yet no church in the place — measures are on foot by the Unitarian parish for the erection of one the ensuing winter — but there is a very convenient schoolhouse which the various denominations occupy alternately on the Sabbath; and there is never a Sabbath without some religious service. The Episcopalians are fitting up a room which they will occupy exclusively, and when the church alluded to shall be erected, the place will be abundantly provided with places for public worship. There is a kind and generous feeling cherished by each sect to all the others, which would do much toward destroying any intolerant feelings, were not the influence of the clergy — to their shame be it written — used to draw closer and tighter the narrow lines of sectarianism.

I have seen no place of its size in the west where there is so little intemperance as in

Tremont. There is a respectable temperance society here, and it has been my pleasure to be present at two of their meetings—which are held monthly through the year—where I was edified and instructed with remarks of gentlemen appointed to address us on those occasions. A "celebration of Independence" was got up here for the present anniversary of the "Declaration," by the young men of the village—and on temperance ground. No ardent spirits or wine were on the table during dinner, although every individual was permitted to furnish it, after the cloth was removed, at extra expense. It was a very cheering sight to witness the predominance of *tumblers* over *wine glasses* on the table, more than half the company toasting in pure *cold water*. Nor did I perceive any lack of inspiration or want of edge in the toasts manifested in the water-drinkers. Indeed the most uproarious man at the table was a water-drinker—it was the generous ebullition of a happy spirit. Nor did I witness a single instance of undue excitement by wine in one of the company. All was orderly, though somewhat noisy, and everything passed off without an angry word or an unkind feeling. The dinner was preceded by the usual services. The oration was a very respectable performance, and the music did great credit to the young men of Tremont. An ode, written for the occasion by a resident lady — a very clever performance — was sung to the tune of the "Bonny Boat," with great spirit and taste. After the regular toasts, many voluntary ones were given. Two, alluding to the delegation from Tazewell county, in general assembly, called up two candidates who were present, thus resolving the civic assemblage to a political caucus — into which, however, it must in justice be said, that no party politics were permitted to enter. It was the first opportunity I had been afforded of listening to a "stump oration," and I was not sorry for the change. There was something in the frank *naiveté* of the first speaker, a plain Kentucky farmer, which pleased me, and a straightforwardness in his homely "speech," which showed the honest and skilful politician. He was succeeded by a physician, who, although he did well, did no better than his unread predecessor. It strikes a New Englander oddly enough to hear a man talk as familiarly of his political plans and purposes, of what he has done, and can do, and will do, "if he be elected," and of his entire devotion to the interests of those he addresses, as if he were in his own castle. Our speakers were repeatedly interrupted with shouts of applause, and calls from individuals among the throng for an expression of opinion on some political question. It is considered the privilege of any of his constituents, while in this attitude, to demand of the electioneering candidate, his opinion on any question which may agitate the community; and he feels bound to give it. It is the custom in many parts of the west to appoint a place and time when the opposing candidates for office may be heard by all the inhabitants of that section, on the questions of policy pertaining to their duties. It is not uncommon, on such occasions, to assemble the whole county or precinct: to roast a whole ox, and to provide every luxury the season can afford. A friend of mine, who recently attended one of these *barbecues* in Missouri, gave me an interesting account thereof, which I will briefly transfer to these pages, as a piece of information, and as affording an opportunity to make some remarks on the *moral* aspect which the custom presents.

The barbecue was served in the edge of a most beautiful "*timber*"—I like this western word—on the margin of a clear, rapid creek. On a level spot near the creek, was a table and seats for the politicians. Here the candidates addressed the people, answering each other, and defending themselves as best they were able. The audience meanwhile huddled closely round the speakers, cheering and putting questions and encouraging their candidates by the most familiar expressions:—"Good," "right;" "go it, colonel;" "give it to 'em John," "hurra," etc. etc. At a little distance above, and just beneath the overhanging grove, a level spot had been selected for the *dancers*. The grass and inequalities removed, the whole space strewed with *saw-dust*, and constantly occupied by men, women and children, to the music of a discordant fiddle, most discordantly sawed. Here were the wives and daughters of the candidates, ready to give their hand to any of the "dear people," who should solicit it for a contra-dance or a waltz.

Higher up in the grove were the "booths," places where liquors of all kinds were freely distributed, and all kinds of gambling going forward, the whole presenting a scene of animation, bustle, noise and clamor, such as nothing but a western barbacue could parallel.

All this strikes a stranger, and especially one from New England, as not only peculiar but full of all moral evil, and leads to the hasty conclusion that the purity, not only of elections but of personal virtue, must be sadly affected thereby. And I feel that I should be doing the moral sense of this community great violence, were I to present the picture I have above drawn, to my eastern readers, without giving the impressions eye-witnessing and acquaintance with the actors therein, have made upon my own mind. Well do I know that a very vague and utterly false estimate of the morality as well as the literature of the west is held by the majority of the people at the east, and I feel it my duty for one to do my part towards disabusing them thereof. No eastern man of reflective mind can spend a few weeks even, in society here, and not undergo a thorough change in the estimate brought by him from his home. As most of our travellers have done, whose "impressions" have been received at the east as current accounts, a man may pass *through* the west in her steamboats and stages, stopping only at the hotels of her thoroughfares, and know absolutely nothing of the internal structure of society, or the character of those who make it. No man can judge rightly of a place or a ceremony peculiar to it with the dust of travel on him. Fatigued, disgusted with the detentions of unavoidable delays, and provoked with bad accommodations in crowded hotels, he looks on everything around him and compares it all to the quiet and order and thrift of his tidy home — his comparisons are necessarily against the scenes of their origin. Besides in this way most of the bad, little of the good, falls under his observation. But let him plunge aside from the great thoroughfare and visit himself in the secluded scenes where alone national or sectional character is to be truly studied, and he will speedily find occasion to change the whole opinion he may have thus prematurely formed. Here he will find an apology for much that was shocking, and a solution to that which was before enigmatical. And here he will find the explanation of those public exhibitions, spoken of above, and which I propose to consider in this connection.

There can be no doubt but that these political gatherings are productive of much evil in the gross, but it must be remembered that that which strikes us as the most *prominent* evil attending them, is not and cannot be considered as attached — part or parcel — to the political institutions of the west. Gamblers and blacklegs and bullies there are everywhere, and they are ever on the alert for a gathering — no matter whether it be a horse-race at the south, a barbacue at the west, or a militia-muster or a camp-meeting at the east. Gambling and dissipation are not the *results*, they are but excrescences which attach themselves to any large body from which they can most readily draw their nutriment: and they ought no more to be called the legitimate offspring of a political caucus here, than of a camp-meeting in New England. Each is the *occasion*, merely, of the evil, and ought no more to be denounced therefor, than the establishment of an extensive, commercial city for the licentiousness which it is the occasion of concentrating within its walls.

With this premission, the first consideration that presents itself to one's mind is, that this custom originated in necessity, and the circumstances of that necessity are not sufficiently obviated to permit a different course.

It is but recently that the means of circulating intelligence have become anything like adequate to the necessities of the people in the west. Presses were few and far between, and except through the thoroughfares, there was scarcely a post-route anywhere throughout this vast region. The people were sparsely scattered over a wide extent of untravelled territory, and had no other means of obtaining information of what was going on beyond their peaceful hamlets than by gathering together at some point — generally a distant post-office — and there impart to and glean from each other their scanty stock of intelligence. Such meetings naturally enough suggested the political gatherings now considered, as the only way by which the people could be informed of what was going on in the country, and what were the political views of those who asked for office at their hands. And this *necessity*, in many places at the west, is yet far from being obviated. It ought not to be forgotten that there is a vast difference between the east and the west in the means of conveying and circulating intelligence. While it requires but two or three days to circulate information through the whole length and breadth of New England, almost as many months are here necessary, and then many and many a settler on his country's frontier, as deeply interested as the merchant who pores over his pile of *daily* papers in his country's weal or woe, has no mode of informing himself but by mounting his horse and riding ten, twenty, and even fifty miles to a post-office or a political gathering: and this not as many times in a year as the merchant in one single week. When this country shall have become as densely peopled as Pennsylvania or Massachusetts, and her facilities for disseminating information as great, this custom may be abolished.

But that this abolition is necessary or desirable, I am by no means persuaded: that the custom may be reformed, and its evil excrescences removed with advantage there is no doubt — nor is there any more room for doubt that in due time this wholesome exorcism will be effected. But it seems to me to be exceedingly proper that candidates for office should be permitted to speak for themselves. Assailed as they are sure to be on every hand with abuse, vilification and misrepresentation, there seems to be a fitness in appealing directly to the understandings and hearts of those whose interests are confided to their hands. Here they can meet their accusers face to face, and forever silence, by a frank avowal of their views and intended course of conduct, the cabal which their opponents have raised.

Be it remembered that these gatherings are composed of men of all political creeds, who, with their respective candidates have come up hither to try their strength in fair expository, argumentative combat. It does seem to me that the "dear people" would be far more likely to come at truth and think for themselves by thus hearing both sides of the question than, as with us, by poring exclusively over a print devoted to but one interest, and that there would be far less danger that men would prevail over principles. And this is a second consideration worthy reflection in this connection.—I have but one more reflection to throw out on this topic. It is this. The licentious aspect of these assemblies has no foundation in reality. The promiscuous assembling of men and women is never the necessary cause of licentiousness. And there is no more danger in these meetings than in any other meeting composed of the sexes for any convivial purpose. Custom sanctions promiscuous assemblies at the east in the ball-room, and the drawing-room, and the lyceum, and other places of public resort, and no thought of evil attaches to them. In like manner a barbacue is sanctioned by custom in the west, and every lady who attends them passes without reproach or suspicion: and the slightest insult offered to her would be resented and punished on the spot. That they are entirely free from danger, no one supposes; but so neither are any assemblages of the kind, and the same objections lie against all alike. A stranger sees with foreign eyes, and many things which appear monstrous, lose all their shocking aspects by familiarity.

And on the whole, I am led to think that the general principles involved in these political caucuses are sound and may be safely adopted in all parts of our country. They have already undergone essential changes, and the advanced state of refinement which is rapidly approaching will so modify them that most of what is objectionable will be removed. They will then become what they now profess to be, merely meetings for political purposes. And what better opportunity could be afforded for a fair discussion of any great national or sectional question? What better calculated to act as a moral check upon the licentiousness of a party press? What fairer chance for the people to arrive at the real political views of the men who claim their suffrages, and to ascertain the opinions and doings of those of opposite opinions?

CHAPTER VIII.

Face of the country unique—Unlike New England—Level but not flat—Oak Openings and Timber—Bluffs—Prairies—Climate—Unusual proportion of fair days—Diseases.

TREMONT, ILLINOIS, JULY 1, 1838.

MUCH has been said and written about the face of country, climate, soil, etc., of Illinois, but after all, no true impression has been conveyed to eastern people thereof. For my own part, I found myself quite at fault, although I had taken especial pains to inform myself both by reading and conversation with those who were well acquainted therewith. And I believe it utterly beyond any one's power to give any description of the face of the country, which shall convey anything like an adequate idea to a stranger. It is perfectly unique—totally unlike, in general and in detail, anything in New England. It is called a level, flat country, and it is, compared to the eastern states, but not as level as it has been described. Its prairies, in particular, have been represented as exceedingly flat and even, and we have supposed an area of from ten to fifteen or thirty miles of an unbroken plain, with no elevations or depressions, more than are met with on our extensive salt marshes. But the country is all unequal—not precipitous—and the prairies present a continual change of tables and sloughs, while the "timbers are broken by high knolls and deep ravines. Besides, I had supposed that the tables in the rolling prairies all ran in parallel lines and equal distances from each other, whereas they are of all sizes and shapes, and lay in every direction in the same prairie, thereby affording a greater variety, and greater facilities for cultivation, etc. etc. The timber on the "bottoms," is dense and heavy, and tangled with a most luxuriant growth of vines, shrubs, briars and rank grass. These bottoms are on all the rivers and creeks, skirting the prairies and making beautiful belts running in every direction through the country. Besides these, there are the "barrens," or "oak openings," as they are called, which are composed of large trees of the various kinds of oak, hickory, maple, elm, etc. These trees are quite sparsely scattered around, making a most beautiful park, entirely free from underbrush, and the ground is covered with a luxuriant growth of grass and flowers. The openings are all on unequal—nay, broken ground—high abrupt hills and gentle swells, alternated by deep precipitous ravines or most picturesque valleys of perfectly easy access even with a carriage. Nothing can exceed the beauty of these unique forests—no art or man's device could have accomplished on so grand a scale a work so perfectly splendid and enchanting. The soil of these barrens is a fine silicious loam and not more than from eight inches to eighteen in depth, but rich, and well adapted to produce the lighter grains and corn, with a careful culture. The secret of the openings lies in the annual conflagrations which pass over all the prairies and barrens of the west. This yearly burning consumes all the new trees and shrubs, and leaves the ground entirely unencumbered. The old trees, likewise, are annually diminishing in number. Scarcely a tree but is marked with fire, and when once the bark is penetrated by the fire, and the wood of the tree seared, the fire takes a readier and deeper hold thereon, until at last it overpowers and destroys it, and the tree falls with a startling crash, and generally consumes before the fire dies out, unless a violent rain extinguishes it, and leaves it for food for the next annual passage of the devouring element. I beheld many a line of ashes, marking the spot where the entire trunk of a massy oak was consumed the previous autumn.

These barrens are the resort of birds of various note and plumage, and all the wild animals found in this country, such as wolves, deer, foxes, rabbits, etc. etc. p 92

The "bluffs" are abrupt elevations, generally in the immediate neighborhood of, and are to be found, I believe, on all the rivers and on each side. Generally they approach the river, but upon one side in a place, while on the opposite lie the heavy timbered bottom lands from a mile to six in width. In the course of twenty, sixty, or an hundred miles, the bluffs and bottoms change sides—or, to speak more accurately, the river changes to the other side of the bottom, which is bounded on each side by these bluffs. These bluffs are from one hundred to two hundred feet high, intersected with deep ravines at right angles to the river, and are composed of limestone, which often forms bold perpendicular cliffs of great height and regularity. The bluffs are generally crowned with "oak openings," and present to the traveller as he passes up and down the river, a most picturesque and charming scene.

And what shall I say of the prairies—those immense sea-fields, clothed with their heavy robe of green, and dotted and slashed with gold and azure, vermilion and orange, white and violet, reflected from flowers of every size and shape, bewildering the traveller with their intense beauty, their rich and endless variety.

The prairies are of two kinds, and are distinguished as rolling and flat. The rolling prairies are gently and irregularly undulating, having swells of twenty to sixty feet high, and of all lengths and breadths; between which are sloughs, called in the dialect of the place "*sloos*." They are low and swampy, and are of the same character of similar places in New England meadows called *runs*. If a small ditch be carried through these "*sloos*," a fine running stream will be produced, which will last nearly or quite the year round, affording plenty of water for cattle. There is scarcely a prairie without this kind provision of nature. These prairies are beautiful to the eye of a stranger, but their unbroken monotony tires the senses, especially when covered with the decayed growth of the former summer, clothed with a garment of snow, or blackened by the recent conflagration. Extravagant stories of the luxuriant growth of the grass have been circulated at the east, as indeed everything pertaining to this wonderful country has *naturally* enough assumed an exaggerated tone. In the bottom prairies, the grass occasionally reaches the top of a man's head as he sits on his horse—a rank coarse grass unfit for the purposes of feeding—but in the common open prairies from two to three and a half feet is a fair averge; in the sloughs it often exceeds this by a foot or even more.

These prairies, as well as the barrens and bottoms, afford exhaustless ranges for cattle, horses, and swine, and the prairies abundant grass for the scythe, all without cost or labor of fencing. The prairie grass is coarse, but greatly loved by cattle, and makes, when well cured, an excellent fodder for the winter.

Climate.—Illinois has almost every variety of climate, embracing, as it does, in its extent, five and a half degrees of latitude. In the southern portions of the state, the climate is exceedingly mild, and favorable to the production of all kinds of fruits and products which delight in a warmer climate. The winters are shorts, and the frost rarely locks up the streams for more than a fortnight at a time. The summers are hot and enervating, the sun being exceedingly powerful and oppressive at noon-day. The climate of middle Illinois is truly delicious. From May to Christmas there are scarcely any frosts, and the hottest days of summer are rendered tolerable by a never-failing south-westerly breeze, often productive of showers, which cool and purify the atmosphere. One of the most delightful features of this climate, is its cool nights. Though the mercury may range above 90 throughout the day, it may sink to 60 before morning, and often lower. This, of course, makes it exceedingly necessary to be careful of exposures in the night air, as such sudden changes produce tremendous dews, which prove deleterious to health. Of this more in its place. In the northern part of the state, although the summers and autumns are all that ever poets dreamed of, the winters are exceedingly severe; not from the amount of snow, or intensity of cold, as on account of the prevailing, piercing, overpowering north winds, which keep up an almost perpetual blast, owing to the open state of the country. These north and north-westerly winds prevail from December to March, all over the state, and from the latter month to Christmas, the south or south-westerly winds prevail. These latter winds are dry and exhilarating, and produce an agreeable sensation on the whole frame. One striking and delightful peculiarity of this climate is, the large proportion of fair over stormy days. Indeed there may be said to be almost no storms during the summer and autumn. Showers are of almost daily occurrence, but no storms. I have seen but one stormy day in twelve weeks prior to writing this article, near the middle of July. Meteorological observations taken by a celebrated physician in the state for the years 1834, 5, 6, give the following proportion of fair days in the year, which certainly pronounce this land a bright and sunny one.

	Fair days.	*Cloudy.*	*Rainy.*	*Snow.*
1834	246	74	42	3
1835	250	67	43	5
1836	229	78	48	10

These observations were made in Hancock county, in latitude about 30° 40′ north, and nearly in the centre of the state, north and south. It is certainly a striking proportion of sunny days,—and it cannot be wondered at, that this should be called a mild and delightful clime.

Health, Diseases, etc.—With regard to the health of Illinois, I am on the whole inclined to believe that a more salubrious climate does not exist in the United States. On the river bottoms, and in wet places, particularly in the lower latitudes, it cannot be doubted there is much unhealthiness; but in the higher and drier regions, I do believe there is far less disease and death than in any spot in New England. And besides, in the most sickly parts, the diseases are far fewer in number, and yield to a proper treatment with more certainty than at the east. And still more, nine tenths of the disease is induced by careless exposures which at the east would produce most fatal results. Great care is here necessary, to preserve the person from bilious attacks and fever and ague, and the utmost promptitude in the application of medical means, but those means rarely fail to produce the happiest results if seasonably applied. The most common type of disease is bilious. Lung fevers, pleurisy, influenza, dysentaries, consumption, and almost all chronic diseases, —if, indeed, I except rheumatisms, are rare here, unless they have been inherited or contracted at the east. In my chapter containing hints to emigrants, etc. I shall give some directions with regard to the regimen necessary for unacclimated persons taking up their abode in Illinois. In what I have here said I have not trusted fully my own judgment, but have consulted several skilful physicians on the spot, and men who would not be likely to deceive me in this respect; and I think any one at all acquainted with the subject will find my statements conformable to their observations and experience.

Water.—One of the greatest *bugbears* of this place and which is always brought up in conjunction with Illinois, is its *water*. I know not how many stories I heard of the deleterious qualities and the disgusting properties of the water in Illinois. Indeed I had made up my mind to undergo a severe privation in this respect, being a great water drinker and indulging in scarcely any other beverage, and expected to taste of nothing during my sojourn here, but a muddy, brackish, nauseating mixture of iron, lime, coal, slime, and the quintessence of vegetable decomposition. Whereas, the truth is, I have not passed a drop of disagreeable, distasteful water through my lips since I entered the state. The most crystal waters of the Green Mountains do not excel the limpid, clear, cool, delicious waters of Illinois. The country, in all its broken portions, abounds with springs, in quality and quantity not to be surpassed in the world, and in the middle of the largest prairies the same delicious beverage, cold almost as ice, may be obtained by sinking a well a few feet beneath the surface. It is true that *all* the waters of the west are strongly impregnated with lime, which renders them somewhat *hard*, but one soon becomes so accustomed to it as never to notice it. It is also not to be denied, that it acts medicinally on the emigrant. But this is far more salutary than injurious, if it be not too freely indulged, and it soon ceases to exert any undue influence on the system. I have never hesitated to indulge freely in its use after the first fortnight, and I have never experienced the slightest inconvenience therefrom. Indeed I do not believe so large a

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tract in New England or the Middle States can be found of the same extent with Illinois, which produces so much pure water and so easily obtained.

CHAPTER IX.

alse opinion upon literature—A fifth rate lawyer's chance of success at the west—Respectable share of talent in Illinois—Libraries and scholars in log cabins—Room for talent at the West—Preferment the result of worth and application—Provisions for education in Illinois—Illinois College—Shurtleff College—Other Colleges—Same liberal policy pursued in other new states.

A VERY false opinion of the literature and norality, as well as of the opportunities for education at the west, prevails to such an extent among well informed people at the east, that I deem it not inexpedient to devote a chapter o these subjects, by which I hope to promote juster and more favorable views. I suppose t is generally understood in New England, that the large towns and cities in Illinois and other parts of the west, are tolerably well supplied with literary men in all the professions. But it is as generally supposed that the smaller inland towns and villages, and especially the agricultural portions, are exceedingly destitute of talent or literature. Such, I know, was in some degree my own impression; and I well remember hearing a fifth-rate lawyer, in Boston, who was making arrangements for quitting the place where promotion was beyond hope, speak of his expectations of success here in such a manner as plainly showed that he expected nothing less than a judgeship or a seat in congress: whereas he will find himself as much a fifth-rate lawyer here as in Boston. The truth is, there is as fair a proportion of talent in Illinois, as in any other state in the Union in proportion to its population. There are, it is true, but a very few minds of the highest order—men who are marked as the leaders of our republic, or stars of the first magnitude in the literary galaxy of America—but there is an unusual amount of very respectable, clever talent; there are a large number of men whose literary and classical acquirements fit them for every office, and would make them ornaments of any society in North America. Nor are they to be found alone in our larger towns; they are very liberally strewed over all the soil of this great and growing state. In travelling through the country, one will meet with a well thumbed and select library in the log cabin, and listen to discourse on any topic in that rude home which would give spirit and life to an assemblage in a Boston drawing-room. Already there is a sufficient amount of literary talent in Illinois to fill with ability and success any chair of professorship in any educational institution, or any office of trust in the gift of the people. But all this talent is not available. Much of it is withdrawn from active life, and is to be met but in the seclusion of agricultural life. Yet there is enough for any present exigency, and as the field of action enlarges itself, the whole ground will be covered by immigration, or the annual graduations from their own literary institutions.

Indeed, a man of respectable talents coming from the east or south finds here many and powerful competitors, and will have to work his way to favor or wealth in his profession, much as he would elsewhere. It is true there is less competition because there is a wider field, the facilities are multiplied and multiplying, instead of being nearly exhausted, as is the case in the east. A young man of enterprise and a small capital, whether in law, medicine, engineering, surveying, or in the mercantile business, stands a much fairer chance to succeed in either here, than any where east or south, because not only is his field larger and competition less, but new sources of wealth and power are developed every day, and more and more. But the same talent, tact and industry are requisite here as elsewhere. The difference is, he *must* succeed here, elsewhere he *may*.

Let no young man intending to pursue either of the above professions, set his face westward with the false impression that a small modicum of talent or education and a careless devotion to his business will secure him either a competence or honor. He will suffer sad disappointment. On the other hand let no young man hesitate an instant, who, has a fair share of talent and tact, and whose patience will enable him to endure, and disposition to prosecute, the labors necessary to success. He can but succeed—fame and wealth, with a fair proportion of enjoyment, are here in store for all such, provided all this be accompanied with an integrity of purpose which no temptation can seduce, and perseverance which no disappointment can overcome. I intend to devote a larger space to mechanics and farmers with hints to emigrants in general, in which will be found some interesting matter respecting labor, produce, prices, travelling, settling, etc, etc.

The following hints respecting education in Illinois I have derived from sources entitled to much credit, and may be relied on as quite correct.

The congress of the United States, in the act for admitting the state of Illinois into the union upon equal footing with the other western states, granted to it the section numbered *sixteen* in every township, or one thirtysixth part of all the public lands within the state, for the use of schools. The avails of this section are understood to constitute a fund for the benefit of the families living within the surveyed township, and not the portion of a common fund to be applied by the state for the general purposes of education.

Three per cent. of the net proceeds of all the public lands, lying within this state, which shall be sold after the 1st of January, 1819, is to be paid over by the general government, and constitute a common fund for education under the direction of the state authority. One sixth of this three per cent. fund is to be exclusively bestowed upon a college, or university.

Two entire townships, or 46,080 acres, selected from choice portions of the public lands, have likewise been given to education. Part of this land has been sold by state authority and the avails funded at six per cent. interest.

The amount of funds realized from these sources, and under the charge of the state, (independent of the sixteenth sections,) is about $384,183, the interest of which is now distributed annually to such schools as make due returns to the proper authority.

By a recent act of the legislature, a moiety of the "*surplus fund*," received from the national treasury, is to be converted into bank stock, and the income to be distributed to common schools. The income of the three per centum from the sales of public lands, will continue as long as there are public lands to be sold.

The unsold lands in this state belonging to the general government, may be estimated at 18,000,000 of acres. Were this sold at the present minimum price, it would produce $22,500,000, of which three per cent. would be 675,000 dollars.

But it is highly probable that this immense domain will not be sold at its present price; we will put the average value at seventyfive cents per acre, or $13,500,000, of which three per cent. belonging to this state, would give $405,000 for education purposes.

The amount of the sections numbered sixteen, and reserved for schools in the respective townships, was estimated by the commissioner of public lands, and reported to congress in April, 1832, at 975,457 acres in Illinois.

This tract is not usually sold until the township in which it lies is somewhat populated, and hence commands a higher price than other lands. The section in the vicinity of Chicago was sold in November, 1833, (after reserving twelve acres,) for $38,705. Other tracts in settled portions of the state have been sold for from five to ten dollars per acre.

Estimating the whole at two dollars per acre, the value is $1,954,914.

Present fund at interest,	$384,183
Value of seminary lands unsold,	20,000
Value of sections numbered sixteen,	1,954,914
Estimate of the three per cent. fund on all public land now unsold in the state, at seventyfive cents per acre,	405,000
	$2,764,097

To this add the moiety of the surplus fund to be invested in bank stock and the income to be distributed with the interest on the school fund, equal to 318,500 dollars ; but as it is liable to be demanded by the general government, I have not considered it any portion of the permanent school fund.

The funds and claims of Illinois for education purposes may be estimated at *three millions of dollars*.

But it is sincerely and ardently hoped that the patriotism, foresight, intelligence, and liberality of congress, after reducing the price of the public lands to the actual settler and cultivator, will be manifested in applying all future proceeds to the object of common schools, by some equitable apportionment amongst the several states of the Union. Hitherto these lands have been pledged for the payment of the national debt. That being now accomplished, I cannot but hope this question will be settled to the entire satisfaction of all parties, by a consecration of the net proceeds to the noble, beneficent, and truly national purpose of educating every child in the Union. Such a disposition of the public domain would reflect more honor on this nation, and tend more to its aggrandisement, than a hundred wars or a thousand victories. It would provide for a triumphant conquest of human ignorance, and carry joy and gladness to millions of hearts.

Notwithstanding the liberal provision in funds and lands for education, little has yet been done by the legislature in providing a system for common schools. A law was framed in 1825, providing for school districts to become incorporated, by the action of the county commissioners' courts, upon a petition of a majority of the qualified voters of any settlement. The voters in each district, by a majority of votes, could levy a tax not exceeding one half per centum on property, and appoint trustees and other officers to manage the business.

This feature of the law was soon made unpopular, and a subsequent legislature repealed that portion that authorized the levying of a tax, and made other modifications, by which it remains on the statute book as a matter of very little value.

The preamble to this law establishes beyond controversy, the great principles for legislative authority and aid for common schools. It reads thus : —

" To enjoy our rights and liberties, we must understand them ; — their security and protection ought to be the first object of a free people ; — and it is a well established fact that no nation has ever continued long in the enjoyment of civil and political freedom, which was not both virtuous and enlightened; — and believing that the advancement of literature always has been, and ever will be the means of developing more fully the rights of man; that the mind of every citizen of every republic, is the common propety of society, and constitutes the basis of its strength and happiness; — it is considered the peculiar duty of a free government, like ours, to encourage and extend the improvement and cultivation of the intellectual energies of the whole: Therefore,

"*Be it enacted*, *etc.*"

Provision now exists by law for the people to organise themselves into school districts, and to conduct the affairs of the school in a corporate capacity by trustees, and they can derive aid from public funds under control of the state.

Upon petition from the inhabitants of a township, the section numbered sixteen can be sold, and the proceeds funded, the interest of which may be applied annually to the teachers of such schools within the township as conform to the requisites of the law. To some extent the people have availed themselves of these provisions and receive the interest of the fund.

A material defect in all the laws that have been framed in this state, on this subject, has been in not requiring the necessary qualifications on the part of teachers, and a previous examination before a competent board or committee.

Without such a provision no school law will be of much real service. The people have suffered much already, and common school education has been greatly retarded by the imposition of unqualified and worthless persons under the name of school teachers; and were funds ever so liberally bestowed, they would prove of little real service, without the requisites of sobriety, morality, and sufficient ability to teach well on the part of those who get the pay.

A complete common school system must be organised, sooner or later, and will be sustained by the people. The lands, education funds, and wants of the country, call for it.

Many good primary schools now exist, and where three or four of the leading families unite and exert their influence in favor of the measure, it is not difficult to have a good school.

In each county a school commissioner is appointed to superintend the sales of the sixteenth sections, loan the money, receive and apportion the interest received from this fund and from the state funds, receive schedule returns of the number of scholars that attend each school, and make report annually to the secretary of state.

The people in any settlement can organise themselves into a school district, employ a teacher, and obtain their proportion of the income from the school funds, *provided the teacher keeps a schedule of the number of scholars who attend, the number of days each one is present, and the number of days each scholar is absent, a copy of which must be certified by the trustees of the district, and returned to the school commissioners of the county semi-annually.*

If the school is made up from parts of two or more townships, a separate schedule of the scholars from each township must be made out.

The term "township" in the school laws merely expresses the surveys of thirtysix sections, and not a civil organization.

Several seminaries, and institutions for colleges, have been established and promise success.

Illinois College.—This institution is located in the vicinity of Jacksonville, and one mile west of the town. Its situation is on a delightful eminence, fronting the east, and overlooking the town, and a vast extent of beautiful prairie country, now covered with well cultivated farms.

This institution owes its existence and prosperity, under God, to the pious enterprise of several young men, formerly members of Yale College in Connecticut. Most of its funds have been realised from the generous donations of the liberal and philanthropic abroad.

The buildings are as follows: a brick edifice, one hundred and four feet in length, forty feet in width, five stories high, including the basement; containing thirtytwo apartments for the accommodation of officers and students. Each apartment consists of a sitting room, or study, fourteen feet by twelve, two bed rooms, each eight feet square, two dress closets, and one wood closet. The basement story embraces a boarding hall, kitchen, store rooms, etc. for the general accommodation.

To this main building are attached two wings, each thirtyeight feet long, and twenty-eight feet wide, three stories high, including the basement; for the accommodation of the families of the faculty.

The chapel is a separate building, sixtyfive feet long, and thirtysix feet wide, two stories high, including rooms for public worship, lectures, recitations, library, etc. and eight rooms for students.

There are also upon the premises a farm house, barn, workshops for students who wish to perform manual labor, and other out buildings.

The farm consists of three hundred acres of land, all under fence. The improvements and stock on the farm are valued at several thousand dollars.

Students who choose are allowed to employ a portion of each day in manual labor, either upon the farm or in the workshop. Some individuals earned one hundred and fifty dollars each during the year.

The library consist of about 1,[illegible]00 volumes. There is also a valuable chemical and philosophical apparatus.

The year is divided into two terms, of twenty weeks each. The first term commences eight weeks after the third Wednesday in September. The second term commences on the Wednesday previous to the 5th of May; leaving eight weeks vacation in the fall and four in the spring.

There are fortytwo students connected with the college classes, and twentytwo students in the preparatory department. Of this number, several are beneficiaries, who are aided by education societies, with a view to the gospel ministry. A considerable number more are pious.

The trustees of the college are Rev. Edward Beecher, President; Hon. Samuel D. Lockwood, John P. Wilkinson, Esq., William C. Posey, Esq., Rev. Messrs Theron Baldwin, John F. Brooks, Elisha Jenny, William Kirby, Asa Turner, John G. Bergen, and John Tillson, Esq., Rev. Gideon Blackburn, D. D., Gov. Joseph Duncan, Col. Thomas Mather, Winthrop S. Gilman, Esq., Frederick Collins, Esq.; Nathaniel Coffin, Esq., Treasurer and Agent; Rev. J. M. Sturtevant, Secretary; Jeremiah Graves, superintendent of the farm.

Faculty.—Rev. Edward Beecher., A. M., President and Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy and Political Economy.

Rev. J. M. Sturtevant, A. M. Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and Lecturer on Chemistry.

Truman M. Post, A. M. Professor of the Greek and Latin Languages.

Jonathan Baldwin Turner, A. M. Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Letters.

Reuben Gaylord, A. B. Instructor in the preparatory department.

Classes.—Senior, 3; Junior, 11; Sophomore, 12; Freshman, 16. Total Collegiate department, 42

In the Preparatory department, 22

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The course of instruction is intended to be equal to the first rate colleges in the eastern states.

Shurtleff College of Alton, Illinois, is pleasantly situated at Upper Alton. It originated in the establishment of a seminary at Rock Spring, in 1827, and which was subsequently removed.

At a meeting held June 4th, 1832, seven gentlemen formed a written compact, and agreed to advance funds for the purchase of about three hundred and sixty acres of land, and put up an academical building of brick, two stories, with a stone basement, forty feet long and thirtytwo feet wide. A large stone building for a refectory, and for professors' and students' rooms has since been erected. The Rev. Hubbel Loomis commenced a Preparatory school in 1833. In 1835 building lots were laid off within the corporate bounds of the town, a part of which was sold, and a valuable property still remains for future sale.

The same year funds to some extent were obtained in the eastern states, of which the liberal donation of *ten thousand dollars* was received from Benjamin Shurtleff, M. D., of Boston, which gives name to the institution. Of this fund five thousand dollars is to be appropriated towards a college building, and five thousand dollars towards the endowment of a Professorship of Oratory, Rhetoric and Belles-letters.

Regular college classes are not yet organised. The Preparatory department is in regular progress and contains about sixty students.

Rev. Washington Leverett, A. M. Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy.

Rev. Zenas B. Newman, A. M. Principal of the Preparatory Department. Measures are progressing to put up a large college building, and to complete the organisation of the college faculty.

Alton Theological Seminary, is an organisation distinct from Shurtleff College. Rev.

Lewis Colby, A. M., is Theological Professor, with seven or eight students, licentiates of Baptist churches, under his charge.

McKendreean College, under the supervision of the Methodist Episcopal church, is located at Lebanon, St. Clair county. It has a commodious framed building, and about fifty students in the preparatory department, under the charge of two competent instructors.

McDonough College, at Macomb, has just commenced operations. It is identified with the interests of the 'old school' Presbyterians, as the Illinois college at Jacksonville is with the 'new school' Presbyterians.

Canton College, in Fulton county has recently been chartered as a college by the legislature, and is a respectable academical institution, and has seventy or eighty students. Rev. G. B. Perry, A. M., formerly pastor of the Spruce street Baptist church, Philadelphia, has recently been elected president of this institution.

A literary institution, modelled somewhat after the plan of the *Oneida Institute* in the state of New York, is in progress at Galesboro, Knox county, under the supervision of the Rev. Mr Gale and other gentlemen.

Belvidere College, in Winnebago county, has been recently chartered, and an effort is about being made to establish a respectable literary institution in this new and interesting portion of the state.

Several respectable academies and seminaries are also in operation, established chiefly by individual effort, where good schools are taught. Amongst these we notice the following, though some of equal importance may be overlooked.

The *Jacksonville Academy*, conducted by Messrs Charles E. Blood, and Charles B. Barton, A. B. is established for the convenience of those whose studies are not sufficiently advanced to enter the Preparatory Department of Illinois College.

The *Jacksonville Female Academy* is a flourishing institution.

A respectable academy is in operation at Springfield, another at Princeton, Putnam county, a third at Griggsville, and a fourth at Quincy.

The *Alton Female Seminary*, is an institution projected for a full and useful course of instruction, on a large scale, towards the establishment of which Benjamin Godfrey, Esq., will contribute fifteen or twenty thousand dollars.

It is located at Monticello, a little more than four miles from Alton, on the borders of a delightful, elevated prairie, and is designed wholly as a boarding school. The business of instruction will be in the hands of competent ladies. The system of instruction will be extensive. The Rev. Theron Baldwin will exercise a general supervision over the institution, and lecture on scientific and religious subjects.

The project of establishing a seminary, for the education of teachers at Waverly in the southeastern part of Morgan county, is entertained by several gentlemen.

A seminary is about being established in a settlement of Reformed Presbyterians in the eastern part of Randolph county.

The "Reformers," or Campbellites, as some term them, have a charter and contemplate establishing a college at Hanover, in Tazewell county.

Thus a broad and deep foundation is about being laid in this state for the promotion of education.

Several lyceums and literary associations exist in this state, and there is in almost every county a decided expression of popular opinion in favor of education.

It will be seen by what precedes that Illinois has already done nobly in the cause of education. The provisions thus made, it is true are not all available, but they form the basis on which is hereafter to rise a structure that shall reflect great honor on the men who had the disposal of her early destinies, and which shall be a "bright, particular" crown of glory to their sons forever.

This liberal policy, it is presumed will be followed by all the new states and the territories. It is a pleasing reflection to a mind devoted to the best interests of humanity, that this vast and beautiful region, so bountifully provided for in all natural resources, so admirably adapted to growth and greatness — destined as it is, to become the home of millions on millions of our children and children's children — is also, in the liberal and just policy of its early settlers, provided with the true and permanent conservative — the salt of education — which is to keep up a wholesome moral tone in society, and fit these myriads, not only to act well their part in life, but to help fashion them for glory and immortality.

CHAPTER X.

Division of land at the West—Townships—Lesser Divisions—Mode of numbering—Diagrams—Simplicity of the whole plan.

NOTHING can be simpler than the method adopted by the general government, by which the new states and territories are divided. The whole country is surveyed by "*meridian lines*," running due north and south. These are intersected by "*base lines*," running at right angles; or east to west. Parallel to these lines the whole county is divided into townships of six miles square invariably. These townships are merely *geographical* distinctions, and have nothing to do with corporation lines. A township is a tract of country six miles square; a *town* or corporate territory, whose municipal affairs are managed by the inhabitants of such territory exclusively, has nothing to do with these merely trigonometrical lines, but is of such extent and shape as may be desirable; embracing a part of one township, or parts of several, where they unite, and are incorporated by an act of general government. A village or city is a town, and such, if incorporated, conducts its own affairs, while the resident in the same township, if out of the corporate limits, is subject to the county administration of the law. I am thus particular, because the system is so unlike that at the east, where every township is in fact a town, and subject to the same municipal regulations as the village or city which may chance to be in the township.

But in order that my readers may understand the simplicity of western surveys, and disposition of the lands throughout the west, I will transfer a more minute description thereof, to these pages, and for which I am mainly indebted to Peck's Gazetteer of Illinois,—a work, by the way, containing much valuable and practical knowledge to the immigrant, whose eye is fixed on Illinois.

In all the new states and territories, the lands which are owned by the general government, are surveyed and sold under one general system. In the surveys, "*meridian*," lines are first established, running north from the mouth of some noted river. These are intersected with "*base*" lines.

There are five principal meridians in the land surveys in the West.

The "*First Principal Meridian*" is a line due north from the mouth of the Miami.

The "*Second Principal Meridian*" is a line due north from the mouth of Little Blue river in Indiana.

The "*Third Principal Meridian*" is a line due north from the mouth of the Ohio.

The "*Fourth Principal Meridian*" is a line due north from the mouth of the Illinois.

The "*Fifth Principal Meridian*" is a line due north from the mouth of the Arkansas. Each of these meridians has its own base line.

The surveys connected with the third and fourth meridians, and a small portion of the second, embrace the state of Illinois.

The base line for both the second and third principal meridians commences at Diamond Island, in the Ohio, opposite Indiana, and runs due west till it strikes the Mississippi, a few miles below St. Louis.

All the *townships* in Illinois, south and east of the Illinois river, are numbered from this base line either north or south.

The third principal meridian terminates with the northern boundary of the state.

The fourth principal meridian commences on the right bank, and at the mouth of the Illinois river, but immediately crosses to the *east* shore, and passes up on that side, (and at one place nearly fourteen miles distant,) to a point in the channel of the river, seventytwo miles from its mouth. Here its base line commences and extends across the peninsula to the Mississippi, a short distance above Quincy. The fourth principal meridian is continued northward through the military tract, and across Rock river, to a curve in the Mississippi at the upper rapids, in township eighteen north, and about twelve or fifteen miles above Rock island. It here crosses and passes up the west side of the Mississippi river fifty-three miles, and recrosses into Illinois, and passes through the town of Galena to the northern boundary of the state. It is thence continued to the Wisconsin river, and made the principal meridian for the surveys of the territory, while the northern boundary line of the state is constituted its base line for that region.

Having formed a principal meridian with its corresponding base line, for a district of country, the next operation of the surveyor is to divide this into tracts of six miles square, called "*townships.*"

In numbering the townships *east* or *west* from a principal meridian, they are called "*ranges,*" meaning a range of townships; but in numbering *north* or *south* from a base line, they are called "*townships.*" Thus a tract of land is said to be situated in township four north, in range three east, from the third principal meridian: or as the case may be.

Townships are subdivided into square miles, or tracts of six hundred and forty acres each, called "*sections.*" If near timber, trees are marked and numbered with the section, township, and range, near each sectional corner. If in a large prairie, a mound is raised to designate the corner, and a billet of charred wood buried, if no rock is near. Sections are divided into halves by a line north and south, and into quarters by a transverse line. In sales, under certain conditions, quarters are sold in equal subdivisions of forty acres each, at one dollar and twentyfive cents per acre. Any person, whether a native born citizen, or a foreigner, may purchase forty acres of the richest soil, and receive an indisputable title, for fifty dollars.

Ranges are townships counted either east or west from meridians.

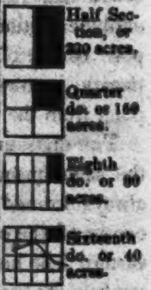
Townships are counted either north or south from their respective base lines.

Fractions are parts of quarter sections intersected by streams or confirmed claims.

The parts of townships, sections, quarters, etc. made at the lines of either townships or meridians are called *excesses* or *deficiencies*.

Sections, or miles square, are numbered, beginning in the northeast corner of the township, progressively west to the range line, and then progressively east to the range line, alternately, terminating at the southeast corner of the township, from one to thirtysix, as in the following diagram:

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16*	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36



Half Section, or 320 acres.

Quarter do. or 160 acres.

Eighth do. or 80 acres.

Sixteenth do. or 40 acres.

By the above diagrams it will be seen that every purchase is easily found and defended. Patents as they are called, i. e. deeds from the government land office, are given and boundaries mentioned in that patent conforming to the lines of survey. Thus, a *township* is numbered from a certain *meridian* and *base*. Thus, Springfield—which in 1840, is to become the seat of government—is situated (see map) in township in range sixteen north from the *base* line, and in range five from the principal meridian west.

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* Appropriated for schools in the township.

The sections are found by simply commencing at the northeast corner of the diagram as above and running west and east alternately until the section designated is reached. Suppose twenty: it is thus described. Section twenty, in township — east — north or, as the point from the base and meridian may be.

The divisions of sections are numbered in the same manner. Thus, a half section is always formed by running a line through the centre of the section *north and south*. The eastern half being the *first half section*, the western the *second half section*. The lesser divisions are numbered from the north-east corner, and called *first*, *second*, *third*, *fourth*, &c., quarter, eighth, or sixteenth. Eighths are usually called "*eighties*," and sixteenths, "*forties*," sixteen forties making a section.

I have been thus particular in this account of the surveys of public lands, to exhibit the simplicity of a system, that to strangers, unacquainted with the method of numbering the sections, and the various subdivisions, appears perplexing and confused.

A large tract of country in the north, and northeastern portion of this state is yet unsurveyed. This does not prevent the hardy pioneers of the west from taking possession, where the Indian title is extinct, as it is now to all lands within this state. They risk the chance of purchasing it when brought into market.

Land Offices and Districts.—There are ten land offices in Illinois, in as many districts, open for the sale or entry of public lands.

The Land District of Shawneetown, embraces that portion of the state, bounded north by the base line, east and south by the boundaries of the state, and west by the third principal meridian.

Office for the entry and sale of lands at Shawneetown.

The Land District of Kaskaskia is bounded north by the base line, and comprehends all that part of the state that lies between the third principal meridian and the Mississippi.

Land office at Kaskaskia.

The Land District of Edwardsville, extends south to the base line, east to the third principal meridian, north to the line that separates the thirteenth and fourteenth townships north, and west to the Mississippi.

Land office at Edwardsville.

The Land District of Vandalia extends south to the base line, east to the line between ranges eight and nine, east of the third principal meridian, north to the south line of Springfield district, and west to the range line between ranges second and third west of the third principal meridian.

Land office at Vandalia.

The Land District of Palestine extends south to the northern boundary of the Shawneetown district, west to the eastern boundary of Vandalia district, north to the dividing line between townships sixteen and seventeen north; and east to the boundary of Indiana.

The Land District of Springfield extends south to Edwardsville district, east to the Palestine and Danville districts, and north and west to the Illinois river.

The Land District of Quincy embraces all the tract of country between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers to the line between townships twelve and thirteen north and west of the third principal meridian.

The Land District of Danville includes that part of the state to its northern boundary, which lies north of Palestine, to the line between T. 30 and 31 N. of the third meridian and east of Springfield district.

Northwest District is in the northwestern portion of the state, and bounded south by the line between townships twelve and thirteen north, on the military tract, and east by the line between ranges three and four east of the third principal meridian, and north by the northern boundary of the state.

Land office at Galena.

Northeast District is in the northeast portion of the state, and bounded south by the line between townships thirty and thirtyone, on the third principal meridian, east by lake Michigan, and north by the boundary of the state.

Land office at Chicago.

The officers in each land district are a register and receiver, appointed by the president and senate, and paid by the general government.

The land, by proclamation of the president, is first offered for sale at auction, by half quarter sections. If no one bids for it at one dollar and twentyfive cents per acre or upwards, it is subject to private entry at any time after, upon payment at the time of entry. No credit is allowed.

In special cases congress has granted pre-emption rights, where settlements and improvements have been made on public lands previous to the public sale.

Pre-emption Rights confer the privilege only of purchasing the tract containing improvements at one dollar and twentyfive cents per acre, by the possessor, without the risk of a public sale.

All lands in this state, purchased of the general government, are exempted from taxation for five years after purchase.

All lands owned by private citizens or corporate bodies, and not exempted as above, are divided by law into two classes of taxation, called "*first and second rates.*" First rate lands are taxed three dollars and twenty cents per quarter section of one hundred and sixty acres, per annum. Second rate lands are taxed two dollars and forty cents per quarter section, besides a county tax for roads. Resident and non-resident landholders are taxed equally.

Residents owning lands in the different counties may list the same and pay taxes in the counties where they reside, or in the auditor's office, at their option.

Non-residents must list their lands in the auditor's office.

Taxes of non-residents are required to be paid into the state treasury, annually, on or before the first of August. If not paid at that time, a delinquent list of all lands, owned by non-residents, on which taxes have not been paid, is sent to the clerk of the county commissioners' court of the county where the land lies, and a transcript of this list is to be published in some newspaper, printed within the state, at least sixty days previous to sale. If the taxes are not paid to the clerk of the county by the first Monday in March, so much of the land, as is necessary to pay taxes and costs, is sold at the seat of justice of the county.

Lands sold for taxes may be redeemed within two years from the time of sale, by paying to the clerk of the county for the use of the purchaser, double the amount of taxes, interest, and costs for which the same may have been sold.

Lands belonging to minor heirs may be redeemed at any time before the expiration of one year from the time the youngest of said heirs shall become of lawful age.

The following particulars may be of use to non-resident landholders:

1. If persons have held lands in the military tract, or in the state, and have not attended to paying taxes for more than two years, the land is sold and past redemption, unless there are minor heirs.

2. Every non-resident landholder should employ an agent within the state to pay his taxes, and take the oversight of his property.

3. All deeds, conveyances, mortgages, or title papers whatsoever, must be recorded in

the "*recorder's office*," in the county where the land is situated. Deeds and title papers are not in force until *filed* in the recorder's office.

4. The words "*grant, bargain and sell*," whatever may be the specific form of the instrument in other respects, convey a full and bona fide title, to warrant and defend, unless express provision is made to the contrary in the instrument.

[See revised laws of Illinois, of 1833, art. "recorder," page 510.]

CHAPTER XI.

Chapter for Immigrants — False notions prevalent at the east — Conflicting reports — How to reconcile them — Home-sickness — Object of the book — Impartiality — Advice — Health — Some capital necessary to success — But few wealthy — Too much praise of the west — Injurious to Immigration — "Illinois in 1837-8," a false text book — Let not the Immigrant expect too much — Seek a healthy location — Be modest — Small change and small men — Thirty cents for a glass of beer — "Improvements" — Frame house and log cabin — Fencing and ploughing — Sod corn — Time to plough — Select good stock — Best reason for Immigration.

There prevails at the present time an intense anxiety at the east to know something more of Illinois; because there are multitudes who are desirous of fixing their own quarters here, or have friends who have already planted themselves in the fertile valleys of Illinois. Most contradictory reports are in circulation respecting this land of promise, and all extremely exaggerated, according to the tastes of the reporters. A man comes out here to explore. He is delighted with the country, makes a purchase and starts for the east to bring out his family to his new home. His reports of this land of promise are extravagant: the soil is richer than the manure at the east; everything grows without culture or care, and wealth and ease flow in golden streams over all the land, beneath unclouded skies, and in a clime shaming Italy. He induces another to come out to this *El dorado*. His is a different temperament, easily annoyed, hardly pleased, a dear lover of home, travel and change to him a bore. He comes out with his expectations tip-toe. He expects to luxuriate in Arcadian groves and lovely little cottages which peep out from flowers and odorous shrubs, while he is ravished with the wild music of ten thousand birds. He looks for ease and happiness and supposes that toil is at an end. He arrives, disgusted with the voyage, fretful and weary, and curses the folly that led him from his home. He finds his cottage a plain log house, naked as if the soil were incapable of bearing a shrub, and his sleep is *not* soothed by the merciless hum of the moscheto, the barking of an hundred dogs, the tinkling of a half dozen cracked cow-bells and the constant grunt and squeal of hogs beneath his window, to say nothing of those innocent but somewhat troublesome little bed-fellows which are generally so valiant in maintaining their right to the places they have so long occupied. Perhaps it is a rainy season, and the mud, of the consistency of putty and as slippery as snow, interdicts all intercourse with remote neighbors. Everything is unlike home, and in his state of mind well calculated to compare therewith unfavorably. His wife — if he have one — is downcast and feverish, making tearful allusions to the comforts they have foolishly left behind. The children fret, and to crown all, they are all more or less affected in health by the change in climate and the fatigue of travel they have undergone. In one word, they are all thoroughly *home-sick*, and as soon as they can, they pack up and return to New England, entirely disgusted with the west. Of course his report of the country is as extravagantly *unfavorable* as the former was unjustly laudatory. He saw nothing here but what was evil. No society, no comfort, no health—everything filthy, inconvenient, sickly. Hence, in one circle you will find the wildest ideas of the richness of soil, salubrity of climate, and beauty of scenery, and the ease and surety with which a complete competence can be obtained; and in another the entire picture is reversed.

This state of things requires that a careful, candid statement should be made — that things should be represented *as they are*, without depreciation or exaggeration. Such is the object of this little book—such the object of the advice intended to be given in this chapter and which I shall give, as nearly as I can, without any prejudice for or against Illinois and the west. I would by no means advise a promiscuous immigration, for I believe there are multitudes who would not improve their condition by changing it. I would say to the FARMER who is out of debt, well located, finding a market readily for all he produces, if he be laying up something for the future and the rigid climate is favorable to his health and that of his family, stay where you are, be content with "well enough," and let "better" alone. I would say to the MECHANIC whose run of business is good and whose health is not affected by so northern latitudes, you are doing well,—a change to Illinois might not multiply your comforts or increase your wealth. And such would be my advice to the merchant and professional man.

But to men of either of these professions, not established, or whose health is sapped by the fierce winds of the north and east, I would say, on *certain conditions* go to the west: and these I will consider.

There can be no doubt in my mind, that persons who find the winters of New England too severe for their health, will find the most favorable results from changing to the salubrious climate of southern and middle Illinois. Nor do I believe that they will be more likely to fall victims to the diseases incident to the climate of that state, after one or two years, than if they were born on the spot. And if they provide themselves with the same comfortable dwellings and clothing they have enjoyed at the east, the risk of acclimating is so slight as not for an instant to be considered. But more of this in its place.

Neither can there be any doubt, that with a proper *prior* knowledge of the country and its resources, a small capital to commence with, and a Yankee resolution to persevere, any one may eventually succeed here. I say *eventually*, for one of the principal faults of opinion respecting this country is, that every one who comes out here will become rich in a very short time. No greater mistake exists. Now and then a lucky speculator, or town-builder, has made his thousands by the turn of a die, but by far the majority of immigrants are those who go on to their farms, or work at their trades, and pass whole years in diligent application before they find themselves possessed of a competency. Their riches accumulate gradually — rapidly compared to the same causes at the east — and require unremiting exertions. Let not *him* come out here who proposes and expects to enrich himself in idleness.

One other consideration. At the west, as at the east, wealth blesses — if wealth be proved a blessing — but the few. No community exists where all are rich alike, and the climate of Illinois possesses no peculiar magic to alter the constitution of society. Poor men there are, and ever will be, here, as elsewhere — men who have either no faculty or no disposition successfully to apply themselves to the business they undertake. Hence there will ever be those who go to the west with high hopes, and return disappointed and chagrined, as poor as they went and as they are ever doomed to be. But I would here say that this country affords the means of a livelihood to any enterprising young man disposed to endure the sacrifice required of him, and willing to wait the due time of success. He can hardly plant himself amiss. Whether at the south or north or in the centre of the state, let his business be what it may, he can scarcely fail of success, if he keep his eyes open, and his hands occupied.

I have taken special pains to gather from various section of the state and from intelligent, candid, influential individuals such hints as I thought might be useful to such of my fellow citizens in the east as determine to "pitch their tent" in the new world I have recently explored, and which have recommended themselves to my own judgment, and I have given them with no little diffidence as they so evidently clash with much that has passed for the last three years as valuable and correct. The truth is, in the slang phraseology of the times, the "west," and particular portions of it in particular have been "cracked up" beyond what it ever was, and most false impressions given of Illinois, especially in New England. This course has been exceedingly injudicious and injurious to the best interest of the whole country. Thousands on reaching the State, have been disappointed, and have either returned in a state of complete disgust, or tarried because they had too much pride to return. I could particularize, were it not invidious, and were I not deterred by a disposition to do no injury to any particular place or places. Perhaps I should fail of doing justice to Illinois, or the east, did I not warn the latter to be aware how they place too much reliance on the representations of a book which has received a most extensive circulation, and which has done an injury to immigration in the end, from which it will not soon recover. I mean a book bearing on its covers the imposing title of "ILLINOIS IN 1837—8." It is full of exaggerated statements, and high-wrought and false-colored descriptions, and cannot safely be relied on as a text book or gazetteer. It contains some valuable statistical information, and a few valuable hints to immigrants, but so mixed up with false statements, and exaggerated descriptions as not to be trusted by an inexperienced hand. I could instance as a specimen of its incorrectness, the account of one river town, which is described as having, among other things, 4 houses of public worship, with settled ministers, and an academy, with about 2000 inhabitants; whereas, there is not one meeting-house or minister, and nothing but an ordinary school, with only about 300 inhabitants. I allude to this as a *specimen*, merely to show that it is a book not to be trusted. And I do not set up myself as censor, or as being better able to judge, than the compilers of this book; but only as more impartial and unprejudiced, and as being far more likely to give an uninfluenced opinion, than one having large interests in the western lands.

But to the advice. And first, when any one has made up his mind to remove to the West, let him be careful and not cherish too great expectations. Let him recollect that the only safe path to competency, is a laborious one, and that in every clime it has its cares, losses and disappointments. Whatever be his business, he must be devoted to it and be content with a moderate accumulation of profits. The labors of the merchant, the physician, and the mechanic, are as arduous in Illinois — nay more so — as in New England. And so are those of the husbandman, for the first three years, and after that his task will be much lighter than that of his brother farmers who till the reluctant soil east of the Alleghanies. Besides, he will be a singular Yankee, if he do not suffer dreadfully, for the first six months — perhaps for a year — that most uncomfortable of all diseases, *home-sickness*. He will meet with many deprivations, such as want of society, uncomfortable houses, coarseness of provisions, want of sympathy, languor, occasioned by the process of acclimation, remoteness from a post office and store, and the entire absence of many of the little comforts which belong to every decent New England home — all this and more if he goes into a new place. And all this is less endurable by the female immigrant, because her labors and cares are increased, and she has less abroad to call off her thoughts from the ever present causes of her dissatisfaction. These are some of the evils, stated without aggravation, which await the new settler in the new world, and which sometimes make the heart sick, and cause it sigh for the land of its early years. But all this *can* be endured, and it seldom continues more than a halfyear — it does in a few cases. One soon gets accustomed to this life, and very generally I have found after that time a stronger attachment for the land of their adoption had supplanted that of their birth. In nine cases out of ten, no persuasions would induce the immigrant to return, and in equal proportion those who have returned at all, have returned within the first year. Let not him, therefore, who has not philosophy sufficient to undergo with a cheerful spirit, one year's endurance of *home-sickness*, and all the sacrifices and discomforts of a cabin life in a new country, venture on the experiment — he will make but a poor pioneer, and will never "*make his way*" at the west. Again, if he has decided to come, let him seek the advice of some one he can confide in, and whose knowledge of the country will constitute him a good adviser, and then let him go with all his household stuff and family, with the determination of staying and liking. Let him take with him as few articles of furniture as he can possibly get along with — and he will not want many unless he is going to a large town — and these cheap and substantial. Let him take all the necessary hollow ware, glass ware, crockery, etc., well packed in barrels, or hogsheads, as they will be far less likely to be broken, than in crates or boxes. Likewise his bedding, and a liberal stock of clothing of all descriptions, as all these are to be obtained at a much cheaper rate and of a better quality than where he is going. But all bulky and heavy furniture, such as bedsteads, bureaus, chairs, etc., had better be procured in some western city or town near his destined location. Above all, let him furnish himself with a choice library, and subscribe for a well conducted family newspaper, published near the spot of his late residence. There is no imagining how many weary and desolate hours may by these trifling provisions be lightened and relieved. I would add here, that he ought to furnish himself with a duplicate set of tools necessary to carry on his profession, as they are of a poor quality generally, at the west, and bear an exorbitant price. This hint will be as valuable to the farmer as the mechanic. He will find it the best and most economical method to send his bulky and heavy articles by water, via New Orleans, shipped at the nearest port, and carefully marked and directed to be forwarded by some forwarding house in that city to any spot near his proposed residence. His clothing, packed closely in tight trunks should be taken with him, although they may cost a trifle as "extra baggage." Above all let him not forget to insure his property, and procure a life-preserver for every member of his family. Hundreds of lives would be annually saved by this trifling but invaluable precaution.

When he reaches a comfortable spot near the place of his intended location, let him leave his family, go and spy out the land, for it will not do to trust exclusively to the opinion of even a friend. And this suggests another important hint which I will here throw out: which is, that he do not expend too much time in selecting a spot.

Many who go to the west, sadly miss it, in spending too much time in "viewing the country," as it is called. The consequence often is, that they become dissatisfied, when they do fix themselves, and in every difficulty they recur to other places they have seen, and imagine they would be better off there than where they are. This begets restlessness, which puts an irrevocable veto on prosperity and happiness. I have been told that this is a trait in many of our New England men, and that the consequence is, they are shifting from pillar to post, without profiting themselves, or gaining the respect of those around them.

There are a few things essential in selecting a place of residence; the rest can be made what one wishes it. This applies particularly to the immigrant *farmer* — as the professional man and mechanic will go where they can obtain the *best business* — health or no health, comfort or discomfort. The first of all is, let the choice of a *home* fall upon a healthy spot. No matter whatever other advantages may belong to the farm, if it be in a sickly place, woe to the man who planteth himself there. A mechanic or professional man may place his family in a healthy situation, while he is exposed, and sometimes can hie away from the pestiferous atmosphere, and breathe a pure and invigorating air. Not so the farmer. He and his are tied down to the spot, and cannot break away therefrom sufficiently often to shake off the influence of disease and death. And he must not trust to the word of residents — they are too much attached to their own neighborhood and too desirous to increase it, to allow them to give an unbiased opinion, however desirous they may be to do so. As a general rule, a situation near the rivers — if indeed I except

Rock river, its tributaries, and the Mississippi above the mouth of Rock river—is unhealthy, although far less so than is generally supposed at the east. An elevated, open situation, admitting of a free current of air, and sheltered from the north blasts of winter by a belt of forest, is the most desirable location for a farm, and is usually healthy. Beware of low, flat, wet prairies; one might as well be in the American Bottom. When he has found such a place, he has but one more inquiry to make. Is it conveniently near a good market? And when these two things are gained, let him not hesitate to fix himself. The soil is good enough any where, and he will be about as likely to succeed in one place as another. I would, however, advise a northern New Englander not to pitch upon a location too far south, as the trial of acclimation must necessarily be severe.

Once more. Too many of our young men, on coming into Illinois, suppose that the superior advantages of education and society, which they have enjoyed at the East, give them a right to assume a superiority (see my chapter on "Literature, etc.") over those among whom their lot is cast. Let me warn every one going west, to be on his guard in this respect. Talent and education are respected there, but an ostentatious and invidious display of them, will insure the deepest contempt, and sink him who is guilty of it to the base level he deserves. The original population in Illinois is made up by immigrants from Kentucky, Virginia, and the Carolinas, and they have brought all their high-souled feelings with them. A man of modest worth is sure to meet with deserved respect and confidence — a blusterer and pompous fellow sinks into immediate and deserved insignificance. When a young man has determined to plant himself in the west, let him put on no airs, let him mingle freely and familiarly with his neighbors, assuming no superiority, and he will find them ready to serve him to any extent with their voice, their purse, and their lives; and being shrewd to discover merit, will draw it out and reward it. I would indeed warn him against imbibing the — it must be confessed — too slovenly spirit of the west in the management of their business; let him adhere to the economical, industrious habits to which he has been trained — they are as invaluable here, as any where — but let him mingle freely and unsuspiciously with his neighbors, and while he sinks his manners to their level, strive to bring up their habits, by a successful example, to the New England standard. Still once more. In the land of the puritans, where every cent of a livelihood is wrung out of the flinty soil by the sweat of the brow, the shrewdest calculation is necessary to obtain a competence, and a cent assumes an importance in business transactions, which astonishes a western and southern man. Every thing here is conducted on an enlarged scale. In times of prosperity, money flows freely, and no man, be he in ever so moderate circumstances, stickles for a trifle of change in a bargain. It is considered decidedly mean. In the same spirit, nothing less than a fourpence ha'penny is in use, as change — called in the language of the country a "*picayune*," and generally abbreviated to "*pic.*" Thus, "one pic," "two pics," etc. The next smallest piece is a "*bit.*" Any piece of silver larger than a "pic," and smaller than a quarter dollar, is a "bit," and passes at the value of eight to the dollar, or twelve and a half cents. Dimes are called "short bits," but pass at the same value of a "long bit," or twelve and a half cents; and so a half dime for a "picayune." It seemed passing strange to me, at first, and very much like a species of swindling, when, having purchased ninepence worth of any thing, to receive in change for a dollar, but seven dimes — seventy cents, — thus making — on board the boats — thirty cents for a tumbler of small beer! But I was too wise to demur, and I soon found that my dime would purchase me as much of any good thing as a "long bit."

I mention these things to guard those who propose going west, against committing themselves by haggling for a few cents in a bargain. A mean, niggardly — or as it is here emphatically called, a "*picayune*" disposition, "damns its possessor to everlasting fame." Nothing is lost by adopting the enlarged spirit of the west, and in the end every thing gained.

It would be my advice to a man of slender capital, who intends to pursue agriculture, to purchase a farm on which some "improvements" have been made. If he goes out into a new spot, he may get the land much cheaper, it is true, but he will find that before he gets his house built, his land ploughed and fenced, his farm will cost him nearly as much as he can (often) purchase one for, with the like advantages. It will take two years to accomplish it. This time may be saved, and the crops from the improved farms will often pay its whole cost in one year, generally in two or three at farthest. Such farms may be occasionally found in market, the occupants having been seized with a desire to go still farther west, or for some other reason not militating against the land or location.

But if he go on to new ground, he can, by industry and perseverance, in three years have every comfort and even luxury the climate can afford, to the end of which I will lend him a little aid with my advice.

His first object will be to put himself up a shelter. If he be in the neighborhood of a sawmill, and especially if he be remote from timber, let him put up a "frame house," in preference to a "log cabin." The expense of the former will be but a trifle more, and has every advantage over the latter. Besides, in a short time, the timber *wasted* in a log house, will, if sawed into lumber and sold, more than pay the difference of expense. But a house he must have, and if lumber is not to be had, he must content himself with a cabin. And this he can make quite comfortable, by filling the interstices of the logs with chinks of wood plastered outside and inside with clay or mud, after the fashion of the country.

His next object will be to get a patch of land broken up, ready for seed. The true time for breaking the prairie is from the middle of May to the last of July. If it be well broken, and laid even, and be permitted to lie unmolested until the succeeding spring, the ground will be exceedingly friable and mellow, and the sod will have thoroughly rotted. Whereas, if it be broken in the autumn, after the grass is ripe, or if it be disturbed after being turned over, the sod will be exceedingly tough and troublesome for years after. So that nothing will be gained by ploughing the autumn before.

After the ground is broken in the spring, corn, oats and spring wheat and rye, may be sown upon the surface with a fair prospect of a good crop, unless the season should chance to be an exceedingly dry one. An average crop of "sod corn," as it is called, is about 40 bushels to the acre; and of oats 40, and of wheat or rye 30 to 35 bushels. If it should be a dry season, the crop will be considerably less. The manner of planting "sod corn" is usually to drop the seed while ploughing, into every third furrow. A better way is to use an axe or some other such instrument, after the ground is turned, by which an aperture is made in the sod, and not *through* it. Into this drop the seed, knock a little soil into it, and the work is done. Nothing more is required until it is fit for harvesting, as the sod, for reasons above stated, must not be disturbed. Very few weeds will start the first year, and *no grass*, if the ground be well ploughed. I have known fifty acres treated in this way, to yield *forty-five* bushels, on an average, to the acre, and first rate corn.

It requires four yokes of oxen to break up the prairie, and costs about three dollars per acre. After the first year, a stout horse will do the ploughing.

When the settler has got in his seed and fenced it, let his attention be given to the erection of a barn and granary. He *can* get along without them in the southern and middle parts of Illinois — some *do* get along thus in the northern part, but miserably — but he will find it much to his advantage to have a good barn and granary. If he have a tolerable crop, and a fair amount of stock, he will find his full pay for his labor, in one or two years. The mice, moles, squirrels, gophers, and other vermin will eat and spoil much of his out-door-stacked crop, and his cattle will come out in the spring stinted and poor, and be constantly depreciating in size and quality from year to year.

I need not say here that the labors devolving on a new settler are arduous and often disheartening. Work and but little apparent reward, are the portion of the first year. But he will find himself at the harvest of the second, if he be but industrious, possessed of a comfortable home and enough to eat and drink, and from this time he may lay aside a snug sum every year, from the excess of his crops and stock beyond his own consumption.

It would be well to have a few sheep of the best breed. They find the finest pasturage in this country, and if protected from the attacks of the wolves, will be found extremely serviceable, as woollens of all kinds bear an exceedingly high price. Sheep ought to be folded every night, and guarded through the day by a well trained dog. They are easily taught, and make a very faithful shepherd.

One more hint I would here throw out. In stocking your farm with swine — a very important consideration at the west — be careful to select a fine and approved breed. If the settler purchase the long-snouted, long-legged, long-eared, and lank-sided species, which too much abound, he will sadly miss the figure. Such he can never fatten — they are like Joseph's lean kine — ever eating and ever poor.

In conclusion, I would say, that it is my firm conviction that any young man who is about commencing life as a farmer, or any elderly man who has sons whom he wishes to educate to this honorable branch of industry—that such, if they have a small capital, enough to pay for their land, defray the expenses of going out, and to obtain farming tools, and a small stock, can do no better than go immediately to the west.

With regard to the best season for a farmer to go out, there are various opinions.—If he can go out in the spring, and early enough to get in a crop, he can get along through the summer, and have leisure ere winter approaches, to put up the necessary buildings on his land, and find himself quite comfortable, but he will have to work very hard. If, on the other hand, he go out in the autumn, he can be getting up his house, preparing his fencing material, etc. etc., and be ready to plough and plant when the spring opens. He ought to go out early in September, and earlier, if he can. For routes, etc., I refer the reader to the Appendix.

CHAPTER XII.

Western Fever—Rock River—Fish—Exploring Committee—Starting—A new mode of travelling—Incidents—How to make a city—Como.

A NEW-ENGLAND-MAN can have but a faint conception of the *rage* existing at the west for "*improving*" the country, as it is significantly called. New farms, new towns, new railroads and new canals, are continually projecting, and you cannot fall upon a knot of a half dozen persons anywhere, but the burden of their conversation is of some new project or other. Indeed the whole conversation at the west is *racy*—it smacks of the soil. And as, when the western fever rages at the east, it receives its name from the point of country to which it tends, as the Ohio fever, the Illinois, or Michigan, or Wisconsin fevers,—so here in Illinois, there are various portions of the state which have drawn the attention of immigrants and speculators. Rock River is the present attraction. Thither are flocking such hosts of immigrants, as must soon densely people the wild and beautiful tracts of country bordering that stream.

Rock river rises in Wisconsin territory, about 40° 30′ north, immediately southwest of Winnebago Lake, and after a very sinuous course of three hundred miles—two hundred of which is in Illinois, in nearly a south-westerly direction—it enters the Mississippi river in latitude about 41° 30′ north. This stream, with the exception of one or two obstructions, in the shape of rapids, is navigable for nearly two hundred miles from its mouth. One of these rapids lies about three miles from its mouth, and on which government is now expending a liberal sum of money. When this obstacle shall have been removed, as it will be in one or two years, the river will be navigable for steamboats of light draught, at any stage of water, to the upper rapids; about ninetyfive miles from its mouth by the river's course, although but about fifty by land.

The country bordering on this stream, is allowed, on all hands, to be one of the finest and most fertile in the whole west, as well as possessing the most salubrious climate. It is principally open, high, undulating prairie, abounding with fine springs of the purest water, although rather sparsely wooded. The river is liberally fed with large rushing tribudtaries, which flow into it at convenient distances for the hydraulic purposes of the country. Besides these, almost every mile in its course, it is cooled by most abundant springs, which gush from its banks in a plenitude which surprises the observer. The current is very rapid, and the waters clear as chrystal. It is a sight to make one leap with delight, as he gazes for the first time on this beautiful stream. Its wild rush of waters, tumbling, foaming, sparkling, as it passes over its rocky bed, its clear, bright waves reflecting the minutest object that lies upon its bottom, and ploughed by countless shoals of pike, catfish,* redhorse or perch, each weighing from three to ten pounds, not to speak of lesser fry,—all this is a sight to gladden the eye, and give a most vivid idea of health and comfort.

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* The catfish sometimes weighs 150 lbs.

It is but a few years since this whole tract was the possession of the red man. It is already occupied by one of the most thriving and enterprising communities in the whole country, so that it is next to impossible to obtain land near the river, without having it second-handed.

It was to this land of promise my attention was turned, in company with some half dozen others, with a view to a permanent residence. We had taken the precautionary step to send on an exploring committee, who had selected a site, and made a most favorable report; all which decided us to take immediate measures to establish ourselves in our claims.* Accordingly we hired a man to take us the whole distance to and from the land of promise, in a two horse wagon,—a large, coarse, lumbering box, seated directly on the axle, with no kind of springs to our seats, and a heavy piece of canvass over our heads painted black, so as to absorb and transfer to those who sweltered beneath it, the scorching rays of an almost vertical sun.

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* The reader will understand this expression, by refering to my Chapter on the subject of Claims, Preemption, &c.

We started from T—— on Tuesday, July 17, (1838), five in number, beside our Dutch Jehu, in fine spirits, full of health and hope. There were two engineers among our number, and we were liberally supplied with instruments suitable to survey and lay out our lands. When we were at last mounted to our seats—a task much less easily imagined than performed, let me assure my reader, as he might be convinced by clambering up once and down again, as we had to do, some hundreds of times on our journey,—I found mine allotted on the *luggage*, and which I discovered to be anything but comfortable, as soon as our heavy omnibus rattled along its way. It was just such a day as was best calculated to make our ride an uncomfortable one. The road was dry and dusty, and the wind just strong enough on our *larboard quarter*, as a sailor would say, to keep us in the cloud of dust we raised. Add to this that the mercury rose in the shade to 103° of Fahrenheit—not forgetting our *springless* seats,—and some idea may be had of our discomforts. Nevertheless we contrived to amuse ourselves, and as we were determined to be happy, we made the best of it, and passed the day cheerfully.

Our route this day lay along the western bank of the Illinois river. From Peoria, the river, for several miles above, expands to a lake of from one to three miles in width; and the current is so sluggish as scarcely to be perceptible. This lake is lined on either side by heavy bottoms, densely timbered, and is as yet unoccupied, save in a very few places by settlers. It is a beautiful spot to look upon, in its primitive and unbroken wildness, but the idea of disease and death lurking in every ripple and concealed beneath every leaf, drove from my mind all idea of beauty, and converted the whole into one vast cemetery, beautiful in its external show, but the repository of dead men's bones. How anybody can be persuaded to reside here, is to me a mystery. We were hailed by a feeble voice, as we passed a cabin on the banks of this lake, requesting us to stop. It came from a pale, emaciated woman, who told us she was the only *well* person in the family, that they were "all down with the fever." She wished us to call on the doctor and send him to their aid, as she could not leave the sick ones long enough to go herself.

Our road through the timber was exceedingly rough and tiresome. *Road* it ought not to be called, *track* is a fitter name. Not a tree had been fallen, and every one went hither and thither among the trees, in search of a better path, as his judgment dictated or his horse inclined. Large and deep holes, still filled with water, whose surface was thickly coated with green slime, continually obstructed our way. Into these were we occasionally obliged to plunge, much to our own annoyance, and that of our poor animals, who were ready to sink under the intense heat. In the middle of our afternoon's route, we drew up on the banks of the lake and refreshed ourselves and our horses at a cool and limpid spring, which some thoughtful person had excavated in the sandy shore. We reached a wild and broken spot sometime before sunset, having travelled about thirtyfive miles. There was one small but neat house, whose sign, fantastically painted, told us was an inn, and one other building, apparently intended for a store, but as yet unfinished and unoccupied.

I have seen no spot in Illinois having so many natural features of New England character, and, as we were all Yankees, the sight was naturally enough refreshing. This picturesque spot, we learned to our surprise, was a regularly laid out town, bearing the imposing cognomen of Northampton. The house was kept, at that time, by a Mr Hamblin, whose kind attentions soon obliterated the remembrance of our toilsome ride.

Unrefreshed by a sleepless night, we resumed our hard and springless seats in our uncomfortable vehicle, early the next morning, and after a ride of about six miles through a beautiful country of open woodland, everywhere changing from beauty to beauty, we reached the borders of a vast prairie, over which we were to make our way, for fifteen weary miles, without encountering any human habitation. Having taken a cooling draught from a spring near at hand, we launched upon this land-sea. Our road was a good one, but the burning rays of the sun, uninterrupted by a single shade, made our lot uncomfortable in the extreme. There is something very like being at sea in the sensations one feels in the midst of these vast prairies. Not a tree or shrub disturbs the unbroken waste of green. Grass, grass, grass, on every hand, interspersed only with flowers and tall weeds. I have said elsewhere, that the idea cherished at the east, that these prairies are an unbroken level, is a mistaken one. Were it so, they would necessarily become either lakes, or impassable swamps. They are completely broken up into hill and dale—on a miniature scale, it is true,—but nevertheless of sufficient altitude and depression to give a great variety to travelling, and sometimes to form tedious, and even dangerous, ascents and descents in the road. Sometimes these ascents are of a mile in length. Between all these ridges, water may be found, and generally running streams, though obscured by the rank growth of grass. These sloughs, or "*sloos*," in the language of the place, are generally muddy, and, in wet seasons, exceeding bad in crossing; as but very few, and those only which are otherwise impassable, are bridged. They serve, however, to form an agreeable variety to the traveller, and a comfortable retreat from the fierce blasts of winter to the wild beasts that range these boundless fields. Besides which, they afford constant water to the herds which graze there, and springs beside which the benighted traveller may encamp with comfort and safety. The grass in these ravines, grows to a great height. It is coarse, and unfit for feeding. While the traveller is passing through them, he can see but little farther than a sailor from the "trough of the sea," and the situation is not wholly dissimilar; but when he reaches the height of the mound above him, his vision is often unlimited save by the horizon.

About midway in this prairie, we encountered a log cabin, which had been erected there for the accommodation of travellers; in one word, a *tavern*. But it was now abandoned, the occupant finding but poor encouragement. It must have been a most uncomfortable residence, with not a tree within ten miles, and neighbors equally as remote.

As it is, it serves admirably for a shelter to an immigrating family which chances to be overtaken by a storm—a not uncommon circumstance in the fairest day upon the prairies,—or by the closing in of night. Fires were burning when we entered the cabin, the remnant brands of a travelling caravan, which we had passed an hour ago, on their way southward.

A little before noon we reached "Boyd's Grove," a belt of timber separating this prairie from another which lay in our afternoon's course. Here was our dining-place. One solitary cabin constituted the entire settlement, and the only one to be encountered until we should have passed another prairie, for which we prepared ourselves after dinner and repose. I had been bruised and jolted to my heart's content, and I set my wits to work to make the remainder of my ride less intolerable.

I succeeded in procuring a bit of old dirty rope, by which I suspended a board from the bows of the wagon-top, and thus made me quite an easy swing-seat, on which I performed the remainder of the ride with much less fatigue and pain. The heat continued exceedingly oppressive all through this day. We had an hundred times sighed for a shower, and as often expressed our wishes relative thereto, for we were nearly overcome with the excessive heat, our jaded animals were beginning to lag most seriously, and our driver's patience completely exhausted. We had nearly crossed the prairie, when our wishes were fully realised; for there came a most copious shower of rain, driven by a fierce wind, and we were most delightfully "cooled off." The rain penetrated our frail covering, and speedily wet us to the skin, making us exceedingly taciturn, until the clouds, lifted by the wind, suddenly let out the sun upon a scene of beauty, such as would make a stoic break out in exclamations of surprise and delight.

We speedily emerged from the prairie, and after passing through a slight belt of forest, came into a small prairie, in which is situated the beautiful and thriving town of Princeton, in Bureau county.

This village, scarce three years old, has the appearance of much thrift, and is surrounded on all sides with the best cultivated farms I have seen in the State. Hundreds, nay, thousands of acres were actually groaning under the burden of their crops. The wheat, either just bound up in sheaves, or just ripe for the sickle, presented a rich contrast with the dark green of the corn, which was now fully grown, standing ten and twelve feet in height.

Our ride the next day was without incident, save that we saw innumerable prairie hens, and some sand-hill cranes. These latter birds are very large and strong, and, when irritated, are no light match for a stout man. They walked about very majestically, and apparently without any fear. I also saw a snake hawk, with a moderate sized reptile in its bill. It flew so near us that we could perceive the writhing of the serpent, as it was firmly held in the beak, and triumphantly borne off by its winged victor. We reached Dixonsville, on Rock river, a little after noon, where we concluded to pass the night, as the day had been excessively hot. In the evening we sauntered along the banks of the river, and came suddenly and unexpectedly upon a spring of great beauty and power. It gushed out from the rocks beneath the bluff and afforded a stream sufficient to carry a small mill. It boiled out from openings in the lime rock, with great force, and was so cold to the touch that we could not endure to immerse our hands in it for a half minute without extreme pain.

Our route now lay down the western bank of the river, which we crossed in a self-moving ferry. The air was delightfully fresh and cool, having been purified during the night by successive thundergusts, and our enjoyment was indeed keen, as we rode onward through one of the most beautiful regions of country that can be found in the west. We reached the place of our destination a little after noon, when we immediately set about the purposes of our mission, which was to lay out upon the river a town site, and as many farms as our land would allow. I ought to have said before this, that we had formed an association of twentyfour members, and had taken measures to secure our claim on the spot where we now were, containing between three and four thousand acres. This tract lies on the west side of Rock river, at the junction of the Elk Horn river, a stream sufficient, at the driest season, for driving all the machinery necessary to build up a large town. Of the beauty and advantages of this point I shall not trust myself to speak, for two reasons—first, I have a personal interest therein, and should scarcely obtain credit for unbiased description; and secondly, because its surprising beauty would be credited by no one who had never visited the spot. Why should I waste time or stationery to no good effect? We succeeded in laying off our town and farms to the satisfaction of the whole association, and christened it with the brief and round-sounding name of Como. We derived it from the spot, it having once been the favorite residence of an Indian chief of that name. There is a lake and city in Italy of the same name, famous for its being the exile home of the banished Queen Caroline.

The division of property took place before we left the place, and the choice money resulting therefrom was sufficient to erect a fine mill, build a ferry-boat, throw a bridge across the Elk Horn, etc. etc., so that we expect to have a town, in fact, and not on paper. Every member of the association is pledged to build a tenantable house within eighteen months, and each one intends to become an actual resident. The country is rapidly filling up in that neighborhood, and mechanics, farmers, traders, and laboring men, will find it to their advantage to settle in the neighborhood. The mill is already in process of building, and a number of buildings, for purposes of trade, residence, and mechanical pursuits. Como is situated five miles below the second rapids, and seventeen below Dixon's ferry. A state road is laid out, and will be opened in the early spring (of 1839), leading from Peoria to Galena, and passing directly through the principal street of the town, which must draw almost all the northern and southern travel, being nearer than any other route, by some dozen miles between the two points. And when the rapids, below and near the mouth shall be removed—as will soon be the case, the work actually going on,—steamboats can pass up to the place, except during the reign of frost.

But I have said more of the place than I had intended, and leave it, with the hint to such as may propose to visit that section of country, that it may not be amiss to give it a passing look.

Nothing new occurred on our homeward route, save that we saw a beautiful stag bound along the road before us, and plunge into a neighboring corn-field, where he was hid from our view. The weather was exceedingly unlike that we had experienced in our upward journey, being delightfully cool and pleasant.

CHAPTER XIII.

Facilities for travelling—Rise of property—Wabash and Erie Canals—Productions of the soil—Ploughing and planting prairie—Beet Sugar—Mulberry and Silk—Hay—Ditching and fencing—Farms on shares—Profits of cultivation—Economy—Speculation—Wealth the product alone of labor.

I KNOW not how I can better embrace the whole caption of this chapter, than by transmitting to these pages, in this place, the entire letter of the Hon. H. L. Ellsworth, Superintendent of the Patent Office, in Washington, in answer to one containing questions relative to husbandry at the west. I shall take the liberty, however, of adding notes as I go along, because I think the letter calculated to give, though a fair, not a perfect representation. Some of the honorable gentleman's statements will be found, I fear, somewhat wide of the mark. I had thought best to write a chapter on these subjects, but believe that by giving my own impressions in *notes*, while the text is made to express another's, the reader will be better able to draw sound and correct inferences.

It will be seen, on reading, that it was intended to apply principally to the valley of the Wabash, but is equally applicable to all parts of Illinois, and the West generally. Cut up as this whole country will soon be, with railroads and canals—not to mention those superior water-courses nature has placed there,—there will be but few portions of the country where there will be no facilities for transportation such as are recognised in this letter.

WASHINGTON, JAN. 1, 1837.

DEAR SIR,—You doubtless expect some further statement than has been received, respecting the investment made for you in the valley of the Wabash. A desire to meet my son, who was daily expected from Lafayette, has delayed my writing until this time. And now, let me say, generally, that the west has grown and will continue to increase beyond the most sanguine calculation. Nor will any action of the general government materially check the advancement of the lands which are judiciously located on the great western canals or railroads. Very little is yet known of the valley of the Wabash. Although the fertility of the soil is unequalled, (1) few have ever seen this country. The reason is obvious; there is no communication with it; and hence, speculators and settlers have passed around it, going west, either by the Michigan lake, or by the Ohio and Mississippi rivers.

Five thousand persons left Buffalo in one day to go up the lake, and yet not one went into the valley of the Wabash. A slight inspection of the maps of Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois, will show a direct route to the Mississippi from the west end of Lake Erie, to be up the Maumee, and down the Wabash valley to Lafayette. It may, therefore, be considered certain, that when the railroad from St. Louis to Lafayette is completed, the great travel from the Mississippi valley to the east, will be by the lakes, through the Wabash and Erie canal, the shortest and quickest route by several days. A person at the mouth of the

Note 1.—The valley of the Wabash has, doubtless, a rich and fertile soil, but in this, it is in no way peculiar. There is a preference in the soil of the West, but there are very few sections where the soil is not sufficiently good to warrant a [illegible] upon it for purposes of tillage.

Ohio will pass up to St. Louis, then take the railroad and canal to Lake Erie, in preference to following the meanders of the Ohio river in a steamboat. Can there be a doubt on this subject?—What time will be occupied on this route to New York? Not exceeding six days. From St. Louis to Lafayette (240 miles), one day may be allowed; from Lafayette to the lake, at the rate of 4½ to 5 miles on the canal (now in operation considerable part of the way), fortyeight hours; and from the lake to New York city, via railroad (now commenced), not exceeding two days. (2)

What changes this must make in the value of property on the route! The value of land depends on the fertility of the soil and the facility of transportation. From a personal

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Note 2.—When the projected rail roads and canals *shall be completed*, perhaps this route will be chosen by *some*—never by the majority: and for this reason, that they can never successfully compete with the steamboats in point of cheapness of fare. It will be far more expeditious and safe, and those who care but little for the expense will doubtless go by this route. But the bulk of western travel arises from immigration, and the bulk of immigrants will seek the *cheapest* route,—that never lies over land where there is good water carriage.

inspection of the western states, during six months past, I am fully convinced the Wabash valley has the best soil and most favorable climate. In the latitude of Philadelphia, you avoid the extreme of great heat in summer, and of cold in winter, and also avoid the danger of early frosts, so prevalent in higher latitudes. (3) You may ask, what will be the markets for Indiana? I answer, New York and New Orleans, the former by the Erie canal, and the latter by the Wabash river (navigable to Lafayette for steamboats), and by the railroad above-mentioned to St Louis; also Montreal, by the Welland canal. A choice of all these markets, equally accessible, is presented to farmers on the Wabash valley, who possess a great advantage over Michigan and Wisconsin, in the early navigation of the Wabash river. The produce of this valley can by this river pass down to New Orleans in flat boats, free of tolls, and be transported

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Note 3.—With regard to latitude, I should advise as a general thing, that immigrants seek the climate in the West, most similar to that in which they have been reared. It will generally be found better, perhaps, to go one degree further south. Of course, this does not apply to invalids.

to Charleston, Baltimore, New York, and Boston, six weeks before the New York canal opens.—This early market may be estimated at a good profit in business. (4)

You may ask if the Wabash and Erie canals

Note 4.—It may not be irrelevant to put in a note in this place; giving some information relative to markets in Illinois. On all the great water courses, St. Louis and New Orleans are the great funnels to which nearly all the surplus produce will go. Rock river, at least the upper part of it, Fox river, and the whole neighborhood of the lake and the great canal which is to connect the Illinois with Lake Michigan, form an exception to this general rule. To all this region, embracing the northeastern part of Illinois, the northern part of Indiana, the northwestern part of Michigan, and the southeastern part of Wisconsin, the northern markets, via the lakes, offer the greatest inducements, and must eventually attract and monopolize the largest portion of the productions of these territories. But, at present, there is a home market for all this region. It is a fact, worthy of recollection, that bread stuffs are annually imported into the region in large quantities, there not being enough raised to meet the consumption. This is owing entirely to the immense tide of immigration which is constantly pouring in there, and consuming, like a cloud of locusts, all that is raised and much more. In the summer of 1836, prior to the time of harvest, every thing bore the highest prices. Flour, $14, corn, $1 50, potatoes, $2, and so on through the whole list of prices current. And this market will continue for years to come; and long before the production shall exceed the consumption, an easy and cheap egress to the northern and southern markets will be afforded to the producers.

will surely be completed? Undoubtedly they will. Indiana and Ohio are pledged to complete them. Nearly all is now under contract, and government has given lands adjoining sufficient to finish the same without any expense to the states.

As like causes (other things being equal) produce like effects, it will not tax your credulity to believe, that the rich lands on the Wabash valley will equal those on the Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania canals, which vary 25 to 60 dollars per acre. Is it possible that lands yielding 40 bushels of wheat, 70 of corn, 60 of oats, and 450 of potatoes, and distant only ten or twelve days transportation from New York or New Orleans cities, can be less than $50 per acre? (5)

In making selections, I have, when practicable, procured both prairie and timber, though I am sure there has been a common error to pass the rich prairie because timber

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Note 5.—Already lands in the vicinity of large towns and even small villages, in various parts of the state of Illinois, command from [illegible] to [illegible] per acre, for the purpose of agriculture.

cannot be found adjoining at the government price. Under this belief many settlers have, to their sorrow, entered the timber and left the prairie, because they supposed nobody would enter that without possessing the timber. The prairie has been entered lately. And such is the facility for raising timber on prairies, by sowing the seed of black walnut and locust, that the desire for timber land has diminished. Those who doubt the comparative value of timber land, will do well to consider that twelve dollars is a fair price for clearing timber land.

Timber land, when cleared in the usual manner, is left incumbered with stumps and roots, fatal obstacles to labor-saving machines. Twelve thousand dollars will be required to clear 1000 acres of timber land, whereas the 1000 acres of prairie can be put in tame grass without ploughing. (6)

Note 6.—The prairie grass, although most firmly and densely knit together at its roots, is very easily destroyed. When recently burned over, a large harrow drawn across it a few times, will effectually kill the grass, and the seed of tame grass will take root in its place without ploughing, and bear very abundantly.

A prairie farm may be put in complete cultivation at from $3,75 to $9 per acre, according to the computations of my son Edward, who has been extensively engaged in cultivating the prairie for the last year. From a personal examination of the land in France, and on the Wabash valley, I feel no hesitation in pronouncing the latter decidedly the best for the beet sugar manufacture. In France, eight, ten, and twelve dollars per acre are paid for rent, and yet great profits are made. An acre of good land will yield 44,000 pounds of sugar beet, from which 2400 pounds of sugar can be extracted, which, at ten cents per pound, amounts to 240 dollars per acre. (7)

In England, paper is now made from the residuum of beets, after the saccaharine matter is extracted. An application for a similar patent is now pending in the patent office. The

Note 7.—As far as my observations have extended I am convinced that the last estimate, as above, of $9 per acre is quite little enough, and from that to $12. This, of course includes buildings, fences, etc. etc. There can be no doubt but that the whole extent of the West, will be found favorable to the production of the sugar beet, and that the manufacture of sugar will ere long reach the full demand made for that necessary article in household economy.

sample of paper exhibited is very good, and the rapidity with which the paper is made, must reduce materially the price of the article. Many labor-saving machines are introduced to aid in the cultivation of new lands. In a few years it is probable that ploughing on smooth lands will be effected by steam, and even now mowing and reaping are successfully done by horse-power.

Such are the profits of cultivation, that I would advise all who can to improve some part of their lands. A small improvement will repay expenditures, and greatly enhance the value of the whole investment. Three benefits may be expected: 1. The crops will pay expenses and yield a great profit. 2. The land cultivated and the land adjoining will be advanced several hundred per cent. 3. If stock is put on the farm the same is numerically increased and greatly enhanced in value by improving the breed.

Either of these considerations is sufficient to justify cultivation and guaranty a large return. I might mention the successful cultivation of hay in the west—from one and a half to two tons is a fair crop. This can be cut and pressed without any labor-saving machines at two dollars per ton; and if the grass was cut by horse-power, the expense would be still less. The profits on one hundred heifers at five dollars, might easily be supposed. Fifty breeding sows would probably bring 700 pigs per annum, and by these means a large farm could be stocked with little capital advanced.

Hay at New Orleans varies from 20 to 50 dollars per ton. An average for the last three years may be thirty dollars. The cost of floating down hay in flat boats to New Orleans may be eight dollars per ton.

There is a practice mentioned by Mr Newell, and highly recommended by others, of putting in hay-seed without ploughing the ground. This is done by burning the prairie grass in the spring, and harrowing in the seed. The seed catches quick and grows well. Blue grass especially succeeds in this way, and the grass will sustain stock all winter without cutting hay or fodder for them. A large drove of horses was kept last winter at Indianapolis on blue grass, on the open fields, at the small expense of one dollar per head per month.

From personal examination, I am convinced that ditching and hedging, as practised in Holland, England, and France, almost entirely, and successfully adopted in Illinois, is cheaper than rails. The general complaint of the earth crumbling by frost is prevented by sowing blue grass seed on the sides. Mulberry trees might be raised on the slope of the ditch, with great profit. Indeed, such is the rapid growth of the mulberry in these rich prairie lands, that the purchase of this land at $1,25 an acre, and planted by these trees alone, would in a few years be highly valuable. Such is the extent of the prairie, that woodland will always be valuable for timber. The woodland is also rich, and fine for cultivation; and if trees under a certain diameter are cut, a fine grazing farm may easily be made, and the good timber preserved. Similar pastures are found in Kentucky; these yield three dollars profit per acre annually. It may be asked, how can non-residents best cultivate their lands? I would remark, that it is nectomary to rent land (once broke and fenced,) for one third of the crop, delivered in the crib or barn. At this rent the tenants find all.

I would advise to employ smart enterprising young men from the New England states to take the farm on shares. If the landlord should find a house, team, cart, and plough, and add some stock, he might then require one half of the profits of the same. I would advise to allow for fencing or ditching a certain sum, and stipulate that the capital invested should be returned before the profits were divided. A farmer could in this way earn for himself from $700 to $1000 per annum, on a lease for five years. The second year a mowing machine might be furnished, if one hundred acres were seeded down to tame grass. Mast for swine is found in great abundance, and the number of hogs could easily be increased to one thousand by adding to the number of breeding sows. (8)

Note 8.—I have been often asked how a young man who could raise no capital could get along at the West. The answer is had above. I know of many persons who would be glad to furnish a farm at the halves for three or five years. That is to say, they will furnish wild land, timber for a house, Corn is so easily raised that it is found advantageous to turn hogs into a field of this grain without gathering it. It has long been the practice in New York to raise oats and peas together, and turn in the swine to harvest the same when ripe. Experiments this summer in Connecticut show a great profit in raising spring wheat and oats together, and feeding out the same to hogs. I have omitted to say that good bituminous coal is found in the valley of the Wabash. The veins are from five to ten feet thick, and a large wagon-load will supply one fire for a year. Salt is also manufactured in large quantities and superior in quality to the Kenhawa salt.

Farmers in Indiana and Illinois are now

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farming utensils, part or whole of the stock, for one half the produce and increase of stock, deducting, of course, the consumption of the family, thus renting a farm. For mere rent, a farm of 100 acres is as good as one of two, unless the tenant has boys to cultivate more; as he will find that 100 acres will be all he can manage well and profitably. And he would do far better to confine his labor to a much smaller field. As for pasturing, he may have, anywhere thousands of acres of prairie in common with his neighbors. No matter who owns it, it is public pasture until it be fenced, which will not be for many years to come.

successfully inclosing their farms by ditching, which has cost from fifty to seventyfive cents per rod. The laws of the states of Indiana and Illinois compel the owners of land adjoining to pay one half of fencing, whenever they make use of, or derive any benefits from the fences of their neighbor. This lessens the expense of fencing one half.

If it be asked what are the profits of cultivation ? I answer, if the land is rented for five years, the profits accruing during this period will repay the capital advanced in the commencement, with twentyfive per cent. interest per annum, and leave the farm worth twenty dollars per acre at the expiration of the lease. Probably the profit will be much greater.

Yours respectfully,

H. L. ELLSWORTH.

CHAPTER XIV.

On Trees, Gardens, etc.

STORIES are current at the east of the gigantic size of trees at the west, which lead many to suppose that the largest trees found in New England are mere pigmies in comparison. This impression is very much like others which have no other foundation than in imagination. The trees on the heavily timbered bottoms of the rivers, often grow to an enormous size, and generally the trees are larger than in New England; but the difference is far less than many imagine. I have not seen half a dozen trees at the west, which could not be readily matched in the white pine forests of Maine, although it can scarcely be doubted, that could the largest of the pines be transplanted to the rich soil of the bottoms in question, they would nearly double their present gigantic proportions. Cottonwood and sycamore trees are the largest that are produced at the west, and sometimes reach an amazing size.

The growth of bottom lands consists of black walnut, ash of several species, hackberry elm (white, red and slippery), sugar-maple, honey-locust, buck-eye, catalpa, sycamore, cottonwood, pecan, hickory, mulberry; several oaks —as, overcup, bur-oak, swamp or water oak, white, red, or Spanish oak; and of the shrubbery are red-bud, papaw, grape-vine, dogwood, spice-bush, hazel, greenbrier, &c. Along the margin of the streams the sycamore and cottonwood often predominate, and attain to an amazing size. The cottonwood is of rapid growth, a light, white wood, sometimes used for rails, shingles, and scantlings; not lasting and of no great value. Its dry, light wood is much used in steamboats. It forms the chief proportion of the drift wood that floats down the rivers, and is frequently converted into planters, snags, and sawyers. The sycamore is the buttonwood of New England, is frequently hollow, and in that state procured by the farmers, cut at suitable lengths, cleared out, and used as depositories for grain. They answer the purpose of large casks. The size of the cavity of some of these trees appears incredible in the ears of a stranger to the luxuriant growth of the west. To say that twenty or thirty men could be comfortably lodged in one, would seem a monstrous fiction to a New Englander, but to those accustomed to this species of tree on the bottoms, it is nothing marvellous.' And yet I have seen, in more than one instance, trees thus hollowed out by nature, converted not only into casks and bins, but into outbuildings, such as pig-styes, well-houses, etc.

The uplands are covered with various species of oak, amongst which is the post-oak, a valuable and lasting timber for posts; white oak, black oak of several varieties, and the black jack, a dwarfish gnarled looking tree, good for nothing but fuel, for which it is equal to any tree we have: of hickory, both the shagbark and smoothbark, black walnut in some parts, white walnut or butternut, lynn, cherry, and many of the species produced in the bottoms. The black walnut is much used for building materials, and cabinet work, and sustains a fine polish. The different species of oaks, walnuts, hackberry, and occasionally hickory, are used for fencing.

Timber grows here with amazing rapidity, consequently it perishes sooner. The various kinds of oaks are softer than at the east, and will not endure, in the same exposures, more than two thirds as long. The wood is coarse and porous, and readily ignites while even in its unseasoned state.

Perhaps the black walnut is the most valuable tree, answering, as it does, for all kinds of cabinet work. Although not more prized at the west than mahogany at St Domingo, it is in very high repute in the eastern cities, for the purposes above-named, and generally bears a higher price than mahogony. This tree bears a large round nut, much prized by many. The white walnut is mentioned above. I need but to say that this is the New England butternut. Hjckory is very abundant, and is used for building and fencing. Whenever other timber can be procured, this should be passed over, as the wood-worm, or borer, invariably sets up his claim to it, and fills the house with the dust he makes.

Sugar maples grow to a large size, and are highly prized for their saccharine properties. Many families have no other sweetening in their house than this produces. Ash is abundant in many places, though by no means generally to be met. It is far inferior, in toughness and elasticity to the eastern ash.

The pecan, or pecaun, is valuable only for its fruit—being a pleasant-flavored nut, in the esteem of most persons.

The papaw bears a fruit resembling somewhat, when perfectly ripe, the ripe cucumber. Its flavor is not dissimilar to a scantily sweetened custard, or an over-ripe muskmelon. It is sometimes called the custard tree. Its fruit is wholesome and palatable.

The plum abounds, and yields its fruit in the richest profusion. Its fruit is palatable—something like the Canada plum,—and makes a delicious preserve when cured in the sugar produced from the maple.

The red-bud is remarkable only for its fiery appearance when it is putting forth its leaves.

In a bright sunshine, a forest freely sprinkled with the red-bud, resembles a forest on fire, so brilliant are its scarlet buds.

Grapes are produced in the wildest profusion and the greatest perfection all over the country, as far as my observation extends. Foreign grapes are easily engrafted on the native stock, and do well. A great deal of wine is made from the wild grape every year. We were told of one man who made twenty barrels in one year.

There is, also, the crab, or Siberian apple, the fruit of which makes a very palatable preserve. One valuable property of this tree is, that it makes a fine stock on which to engraft the common apple. Apples have thus been raised the third year in considerable quantities.

Peaches, plums, nectarines—indeed all kinds of stone fruit,—do well, and arrive at maturity in a wonderfully short space of time. A man who sets himself down in an entirely new place, can have as much fruit of all kinds as he wishes in four or five years. I would, by all means, advise emigrants to take out with them all kinds of fruit seed, and in plenty.

The peach stone may be cracked, and the meats carefully preserved, and thereby a great deal of weight and bulk saved: and they will come up quicker. Beside, they can be sown in the spring, and will come forward as rapidly as if they had been planted, in the stone, the autumn before. No matter how many trees he may have, they will always bring cash and a high price. Many persons are driving a profitable business by growing fruit-trees for the market.

By all means let the settler sow, immediately, a nursery of black locust. In three years' time they will afford quite a shade, and greatly adorn a plantation on the prairie. Besides, the trees make a capital hedge for fence, and in six years his thicket will afford him fuel and railing for fence.

Common chestnuts, also, do well. They come up readily, and thrive well. It might be well for the immigrant to take a bushel or two out with him.

In this connexion, as well, perhaps, as any where, I may suggest to immigrants to take out with him all the varieties of garden seeds he can obtain, and let him be sure, among the first things he does, to subdue a small patch of ground for a garden. Everything that grows *well* in New England, grows *better* at the west.

Fruit-trees, suitable for transplanting, can generally be had at all the large towns on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. Whoever is going out in the spring, will do well to take a few dozens along with him. The cost is nothing, in consideration, to the pleasure derived from having fruit one or two years earlier, of which by this means you are sure.

I see no good reason why the white pine may not be readily and successfully introduced into any place in the west. I would recommend, to any one who may go from a pine neighborhood, to gather a quantity of pine burrs, or apples, and make the experiment. Should it be crowned with success, it would afford the projector a splendid profit, as evergreens are brought from an immense distance, and bear an exorbitant price.

The mulberry has been introduced with success into Illinois and Missouri, and there is no reason why it may not be extensively and successfully cultivated anywhere in moderate latitudes at the west. I would recommend every one to carry out a few seeds of the mulberry. He will have land enough to sow them upon, and they will take tolerable care of themselves; in a few years he may find them valuable. At any rate, they will serve to ornament his grounds.

In this connexion I would touch on some other things not irrelevant. The enterprise which sends out our young men to the west, prompts them to "try their hand" at almost anything which holds out a fair chance of success. Thus, already, do we witness experiments in almost all the projects of the day relating to agriculture. Thus we see men essaying their fortunes by raising broom-corn, mulberries and silk, sugar beets, wine-grapes, etc. etc. There can be no doubt that all these will succeed in the west, if they will anywhere. The sugar beet, for instance, has been introduced into Illinois, and cultivated on an extensive scale. Sugar is generally brought from New Orleans, and is retailed at from twelve and a half cents to thrice that sum. Illinois must, at no remote period, produce sugar from the beet, not only for home consumption, but for exportation; and she may well hope to compete successfully with the cane-growing districts. Her soil is precisely the one the beet delights in, especially towards the northern part of the state. Beets not only grow to an enormous size, but yield a larger quantity of saccharine matter than anywhere east of the Alleghanies. Every farmer might easily raise his own "sweetening," at a trifling expense, compared to what it shall cost him to get it from New Orleans. The expense of the necessary machinery is trifling—almost any farmer might manufacture a grinder and a press which would answer the purpose; and the pulp—which is the best article to mingle with meal for the fattening of cattle,—will repay the cost of raising and harvesting. The whole process is very simple, merely requiring a little care and judgment, and can readily be learned from any of the many treatises on that subject.

Here, too, it might be well to suggest the propriety of taking out a duplicate, or even triplicate, set of farming and garden tools. They will be found much cheaper in Boston or New York, or even in Pittsburg and Cincinnati, than at St. Louis, Alton, or Chicago. I have elsewhere spoken of other articles of husbandry and household stuff and need not here repeat it.

It may not be amiss to place in this chapter a few remarks on lumber, buildings, etc., as it is closely connected with the growth and character of trees. I have already said there was but little pine timber at the west. The borders of the Michigan Lake, and the upper water of the Mississippi, are exceptions to this rule. Throughout Illinois, with the exception of that part immediately bordering on Lake Michigan, pine lumber is scarce and costly. At St. Louis it is from $50 to $60 per M.; at Peoria from $60 to $70, and at any of the inland towns enough more to pay for carting. In the Rock river county, it is worth from $75 to $90. So that, to any but those of property, it is entirely out of the question to use pine timber in building. The wood of the country must be substituted. Ordinarily, lumber, which grows on the spot, is from $25 to $35 per M. at the mill. Lumber, however, is fast falling, and will continue to do so as fast as the facilities for its manufacture and transportation increase. When the great Michigan and Illinois canal shall be completed, the price of pine lumber anywhere on the Illinois river, and as far down as St. Louis, on the Mississippi, will be reduced from fifty to seventy *per centum*.

I am satisfied that those persons who go from the east, and who propose to put up a frame house at the west, would find it to their advantage to buy their windows all glazed, and their doors all finished, and perhaps their floor boards and finishing stuff, where they are,—or else at Pittsburg or Cincinnati,—and have them well and closely packed, and shipped to the nearest point of water communication. They will cost no more, certainly, and will be much better than can be found in the neighborhood of their location.

I should also recommend the erection of *frame* houses, where lumber can be obtained suitable for the purpose. Frame houses are far more comfortable, and present a much more comfortable appearance. I have seen many very comfortable log houses, but such invariably *cost* more than a frame house of the same size. In some places lumber is not to be obtained at all, and in such cases the only shelter must be the log cabin. These may be made tolerably inhabitable with pains. The door and other apertures should be opposite each other, the chimney at the end; and if a double cabin, or one of two rooms, is designed, a space of ten or twelve feet between them should be left, and roofed over. Forks may be set in the ground, and porches or sheds may be made on the sides, eight feet in width. The cost is trifling, and they add greatly to the coolness of the dwelling in summer, and its warmth in winter, besides protecting the body of the house from rains. Hundreds of cabins are made without a nail or particle of iron about them, or a single piece of sawed plank.

They are constructed after the following manner: Straight trees are felled of a size that a common team can draw, or, as the phrase is, "snake" them to the intended spot. The common form of a large cabin is that called a "double cabin;" that is, two square pens, with an open space between, connected by a roof above and a floor below, so as to form a parallelogram of nearly triple the length of its depth. In the open space the family take their meals during the pleasant weather; and it serves the threefold purpose of kitchen, lumber-room, and dining-room. The logs of which it is composed, are notched on to one another in the form of a square. The roof is covered with thin splits of oak, not unlike staves. Sometimes they are made of ash, and, in the lower country, of cypress; and they are called clapboards. Instead of being nailed, they are generally confined in their place by heavy timber, laid at right angles across them. This gives the roof of a cabin a unique and shaggy appearance; but if the clapboards have been carefully prepared from good timber, they form a roof sufficiently impervious to common rains. The floors are made from short and thick plank, split from the yellow poplar, cottonwood, black walnut, and sometimes oak. They are confined with wooden pins, and are technically called "puncheons." If an emigrant can furnish a few pounds of nails, and a dozen panes of glass, he may add to his comforts; and if a saw-mill is near, and plank or boards cheap, he may save himself the labor of splitting puncheons or slabs for floors and doors. In addition to the cabin, he will need a meat-house, a corn-crib, and stables, all built of logs in the same rough manner.

I will close this miscellaneous chapter with some remarks on animals, which may be as useful to the raiser of stock, as pleasing to the sportsman. I have gleaned them from the best authorities.

There are several kinds of wild animals in the state of Illinois: of these, the principal and most numerous are deer, wolves, raccoons, opossums, etc. etc. Several species formerly common have become scarce, and are constantly retreating before the march of civilization; and some are no longer to be found. The buffalo has entirely left the limits of the state, and indeed all the settled parts of the western country, and is now found only on the head-waters of the Mississippi and its tributaries, and on the vast prairies west of the Missouri river. This animal once roamed at large over the plains of Illinois; and, so late as the commencement of the present century, was found in considerable numbers; and traces of them are still remaining in the buffalo paths, which are to be seen in several parts of the state. These are well-beaten tracks, leading generally from the prairies in the interior of the state to the margins of the large rivers, showing the course of their migrations as they changed their pastures periodically, from the low marshy alluvion, to the dry upland plains. Their paths are narrow, and remarkably direct, showing that the animals travelled in single file through the woods, and pursued the most direct course to their places of destination.

Deer are more abundant than at the first settlement of the country. They increase, to a certain extent, with the population. The reason of this appears to be, that they find protection in the neighborhood of man from the beasts of prey that assail them in the wilderness, and from whose attacks their young particularly can with difficulty escape. They suffer most from the wolves, who hunt in packs, like hounds, and who seldom give up the chase until the deer is taken.

Immense numbers of deer are killed every year by the hunters, who take them for the hams and skins alone, throwing away the rest of the carcase. Venison hams and hides are important articles of export. Fresh hams usually sell at from seventyfive cents to one dollar and fifty cents a pair, and when properly cured, are a delicious article of food.

There are several ways of hunting deer, all of which are equally simple. Most generally the hunter proceeds to the woods on horseback, in the day time, selecting particularly certain hours which are thought to be most favorable. It is said, that during the season when the pastures are green, this animal rises from its lair precisely at the rising of the moon, whether in the day or night; such is the uniform testimony of experienced hunters. If it be true, it is certainly a curious display of animal instinct. This hour, therefore, is always kept in view by the hunter, as he rides slowly through the forest with his rifle on his shoulder, while his keen eye penetrates the surrounding shades. On beholding a deer, the hunter slides from his horse, and while the deer is observing the latter, creeps upon him, keeping the largest trees between himself and the object of pursuit, until he gets near enough to fire. An expert woodsman seldom fails to hit his game.

Another mode is, to watch at night, in the neighborhood of the salt-licks. These are spots where the earth is impregnated with saline particles, or where the salt-water oozes through the soil. Deer and other grazing animals frequent such places, and remain for hours licking the earth. The hunter secretes himself here, either in the thick top of a tree, or, most generally, in a screen erected for the purpose, and artfully concealed, like a masked battery, with logs or green boughs. This practice is pursued only in the summer, or early in the autumn, in cloudless nights, when the moon shines brilliantly, and objects may be readily discovered. At the rising of the moon, or shortly after, the deer, having risen from their beds, approach the lick. Such places are generally bare of timber, but surrounded by it, and as the animal is about to emerge from the shade into the clear moonlight, he stops, looks cautiously around, and snuffs the air. Then he advances a few steps, stops, and stops again, smells the ground, or raises his expanded nostrils, as if he "snuffed the approach of danger in every tainted breeze." The hunter sits motionless, and almost breathless, waiting until the animal shall get within rifle-shot, and until its position in relation to the hunter and the light, shall be favorable, when he fires with an unerring aim. A few deer only can be thus killed in one night, and after a few nights these timorous animals are driven from the haunts which are thus disturbed.

Many of the frontier people dress deerskins, and make them into pantaloons and hunting-shirts. These articles are indispensable to all who have occasion to travel in viewing land, or for any other purpose, beyond the settlements, as cloth garments, in the shrubs and vines, would soon be in strings.

It is a novel and pleasant sight to a stranger, to see the deer in flocks of eight, ten, or fifteen in number, feeding on the grass of the prairies, or bounding away at the sight of a traveller.

The elk has disappeared. A few have been seen in late years, and some taken; but it is not known that any remain at this time, within the limits of the state.

The bear is seldom seen. This animal inhabits those parts of the country that are thickly wooded, and delights particularly in the cane-brakes, where it feeds in the winter on the tender shoots of the young cane. The meat is tender and finely flavored, and is esteemed a great delicacy.

Wolves are numerous in most parts of the state. There are two kinds — the common or black wolf, and the prairie wolf. The former is a large, fierce animal, and very destructive to sheep, pigs, calves, poultry, and even young colts. They hunt in packs, and after using every stratagem to circumvent their prey, attack it with remarkable ferocity. Like the Indian, they always endeavor to surprise their victim, and strike the mortal blow without exposing themselves to danger. They seldom attack man, except when asleep or wounded. The largest animals, when wounded, entangled, or otherwise disabled, become their prey; but in general they only attack such as are incapable of resistance. Their most common prey is the deer, which they hunt regularly; but all defenceless animals are alike acceptable to their ravenous appetites. When tempted by hunger they approach the farm-houses in the night, and snatch their prey from under the very eye of the farmer; and when the latter is absent with his dogs, the wolf is sometimes seen by the females lurking about in mid-day, as if aware of the unprotected state of the family.

The smell of burning assafœtida has a remarkable effect upon this animal. If a fire be made in the woods, and a portion of this drug thrown into it, so as to saturate the atmosphere with the odor, the wolves, if any are within reach of the scent, immediately assemble around, howling in the most mournful manner; and such is the remarkable fascination under which they seem to labor, that they will often suffer themselves to be shot down rather than leave the spot. The prairie wolf is a smaller species, but little larger than a fox, and takes its name from its habit of residing entirely upon the open plains. Even when hunted with dogs, it will make circuit after circuit round the prairie, carefully avoiding the forest, or only dashing into it occasionally when hard pressed, and then returning to the plain. In size and appearance this animal is midway between the wolf and the fox, and in color it resembles the latter, being of a very light red. It preys upon poultry, rabbits, young pigs, calves, &c. The most friendly relations subsist between it and the common wolf, and they constantly hunt in packs together. Nothing is more common than to see a large black wolf in company with several prairie wolves.

The fox abounds in some places in great numbers, though, generally speaking, the animal is scarce. It will undoubtedly increase with the population.

The panther and wild cat are occasionally found in the forests. The open country is not well suited to their shy habits, and they are less frequently seen than in the neighboring states.

The beaver and otter were once numerous, but are now seldom seen, except on the frontiers.

There are no rats, except along the large rivers, where they have landed from the boats.

Wild horses are found ranging the prairies and forests in some parts of the state. They are small in size, of the Indian or Canadian breed, and very hardy. They are caught in pens, or with ropes having nooses attached to them, and broken to the saddle and harness. The French, who monopolize the business of catching and breaking these horses, make them an article of traffic; their common price is from twenty to thirty dollars. They are found chiefly in the lower end of the American bottom, near the junction of the Kaskaskia and Mississippi rivers, called the Point.

They are the offspring of the horses brought there by the first settlers, and which were suffered to run at large. The Indians of the west have many such horses, which are commonly called Indian ponies.

The gray and fox squirrels often do mischief in the corn-fields, and the hunting of them makes fine sport for the boys. It is a rule amongst the Kentuckyrifle men to shoot a squirrel only through his eyes, and that from the tops of the highest trees of the forest. It is evidence of a bad marksman, for a hunter to hit one in any other part.

The gophar is a singular little animal, about the size of a squirrel. It burrows in the ground, is seldom seen, but its works make it known. It labors during the night, in digging subterranean passages in the rich soil of the prairies, and throws up hillocks of fresh earth, within a few feet distance from each other, and from twelve to eighteen inches in height. They form these by removing the earth from their holes, by means of a pouch with which nature has furnished them on each side of their mouth; a dozen of these hillocks have been seen, the production of one night's labor, and apparently from a single gophar. The passages are formed in such a labyrinth, that it is a difficult matter to find the animal by digging. They are very mischievous in corn and potato fields, and in gardens they prey upon all kinds of bulbous roots. Their bite is said to be poisonous.

The polcoat is very destructive to poultry.

The raccoon and opossum are very numerous, and extremely troublesome to the farmer, as they not only attack his poultry, but plunder his corn-fields. They are hunted by boys, and large numbers of them destroyed. The skins of the raccoon pay well for the trouble of taken them, as the fur is in demand.

Rabbits are very abundant, and in some places extremely destructive to the young orchards and to garden vegetables. The fence around a nursery must always be so close as to shut out rabbits, and young apple-trees must be secured at the approach of winter, by tying straw or corn stalks around their bodies, for two or three feet in height, or the bark will be stripped off by these mischievous animals.

The ponds, lakes and rivers, during the migration season of water-fowls, are literally covered with swans, pelicans, cranes, geese, brants, and ducks, of all the tribes and varieties. Many of these fowls rear their young on the islands and sand-bars of the large rivers. In the autumn, multitudes of them are killed for their quills, feathers, and flesh.

The prairie fowl is seen in great numbers on the prairies in the summer, and about the corn-fields in the winter. This is the grouse of the New York market. They are easily taken in the winter, and when fat are excellent for the table.

Partridges (the quail of New England) are taken with nets, in the winter, by hundreds in a day, and furnish no trifling item in the luxuries of the city market.

Bees are to be found in the trees of every forest. Many of the frontier people make it a prominent business, after the frost has killed the vegetation, to hunt them for the honey and wax, both of which find a ready market.

Bees are profitable stock for the farmer, and are kept to a considerable extent.

Poisonous reptiles are not so common as in unsettled regions of the same latitude, where the country is generally timbered. Burning the prairies undoubtedly destroys multitudes of them.

CHAPTER XV.

On Claims, Pre-emption, etc—Public Lands—Squatters—Associations for mutual aid and defence—Quantity of land to be claimed—Conditions of holding claim—Title, how to be obtained—Public Sale—Simple machinery—Policy of government.

I HAVE been asked repeatedly to explain the nature of claims, pre-emption rights, and the various parts of the machinery by which settlers on government land are protected, and the title to their land secured.

Certain tracts of land in the northern part of Illinois and the adjoining states and territories, are as yet out of the market. Some of them are not surveyed at all, others have been surveyed by the government board of engineers. These lands belong to the United States. From time to time certain portions of this land are brought into market, at which time all tracts of land not entered agreeably to the existing pre-emption law, are put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder.

These lands are generally all taken up long before they are brought into market. The people thus occupying the government land are denominated "*Squatters*," in common *parlance* — in law "Settlers." So soon as some half-dozen men have *settled* themselves down in a neighborhood, and laid claim to the soil, or more appropriately, to the right of pre-emption — they form themselves into an *Association*, each member signing a constitution by which they pledge themselves to abide. This constitution decides the manner in which claims shall be made in the territory — it embraces the quantity of land and the conditions on which it shall be held. They thus become necessary to each other, and stand by each other, while if any one of the Association fails to fulfil his part of the mutual contract, they permit and encourage any one to "*jump*" or supersede him, and defend him therein. Formerly when land was more plenty, each member was permitted to claim 640 acres (or a section, one mile square) of prairie, and 160 acres of woodland, called always at the west, "*timber*." Associations are reducing the quantity one half, i. e. 320 and 80 acres, as above.

The conditions of holding the claim are in all cases, I believe, that the settler or claimant, shall first sign the constitution and become a member of the Association. Then he shall plough a distinct furrow completely round his claim, or stake it out in a plain and durable manner. Then within a limited period he shall break up a certain portion of prairie (say 20 acres) and fence it, and put up a suitable house for habitation. But all this is nothing unless he become an actual resident. He may put an agent thereon, and thus hold it, if the agent be trustworthy; but if that agent be unfaithful and lay claim to said tract, unless the actual claimant come and take possession, the agent enters into the right and holds it as his own claim.

These lands are held by mutual consent and the forbearance of government, which has indeed encouraged this kind of immigration. The settlers have no title whatever, and in conveying them only give a quit-claim to the right of claimance. The title is to be obtained when the land shall have been bought of government, and directly under the seal of the United States. The purchaser only pays for the claim, he must defend it and secure his land when it comes into market, as the first occupant would have been obliged to do. But he is protected in the same manner by the Association, one of which he becomes on purchasing.

Many have supposed that much difficulty exists in thus claiming lands, and that it is a dangerous piece of business. But I can assure my reader, there is not the least danger of losing title or life. Every thing relating to the whole business is understood in the whole community, and the mutual laws which they have framed for their own management are sufficient, in the absence of all other law, as must necessarily be the case there, to restrain all violence and to protect each settler in his rights.

Although there may seem to the stranger to be a deal of complication in this machinery, yet I can assure him it is extremely simple; and that every one knowing, as he does, the exact method of its operation, there is seldom any derangement at all, and never sufficient to affect the whole machine. No one who goes there would dream from actual acquaintance but that every thing was ordered by a well regulated civil police—as indeed it is, only it is not supported and administered by government. I have seen no where more orderly, industrious, intelligent, peace-seeking inhabitants than I found among these same "*squatters*." They are mainly from New England and the Middle States, with a "fair sprinkling," from the south. There have passed several pre-emption bills in favor of the settlers upon government lands, but none of which are as liberal as they deserve to be. The policy of goverment has been, hitherto, liberal towards the original settlers, but of late a narrower policy seems to have prevailed.

A pre-emption law, framed alike favorable to government and the settler, would be a great and mutual blessing, and the time is not remote, I hope, when such an one shall be devised and successfully carried through both branches of the national legislature.

The intention of a pre-emption bill is to protect the actual settler from the assaults of the mere speculator, so that he may have the right to enter and pay for his land before and in preference to any one else, at the government price of $1,25 per acre.

CONCLUSION.

Having made arrangements with our Rock river Jehu, the Dutchman of former notice, to take me to Peoria, punctual to the time he roused me from my slumbers at an hour before dawn, and mounting again our lumbering vehicle I bade adieu to the pleasant little town of Tremont, where I had formed many pleasant acquaintances, and with whom my parting would have been far more painful but for the conviction that I should ere long again press their friendly hands. We found the morning air delicious, and enjoyed it with a double zest as the clear calm rising of the sun portended a hot and sultry day. We reached the river and having roused the ferryman, we embarked "to cross the ferry." While our man of the boat tugged at the rope by which he drew us over the sluggish stream, we chatted with him of matters pertaining to his vocation. He told us that it was mighty sickly there, every body had "the chills and fever." By every body we suppose he meant those in the same employment as himself, as his knowledge could have extended but little further. I was struck with the air of pride with which he boasted of his own iron health. "These *suckers*" — a term applied generally to settlers in Illinois — "are a tame race — they can't bear a mighty severe scraghin. Why, where I was raised, in old Kentuck, if a man should ketch the chills he'd be laughed at. Why, I could lie *in* this river every night and not be sick, I reckon. But let a gentle *dew* fall on a *sucker*, and crack — he's got the shakes." He had no opinion of the country at all, and recommending him to turn right about face for "old Kentuck," we made our way to the boat, which was advertised to start at eight o'clock, A. M. We were under weigh at ten. Our sail up the river was without other incidents, than were afforded at the various places where the boat stopped, arising from the spirited manner in which the elections were going on. Throngs came on board the boat to learn the result below, and to give us information relative to their own district. Throughout our whole course the Van Buren ticket prevailed. This was attributed, on the part of the Whigs, to the free votes of the Irish, who were there in great numbers, on the rail-roads and the canals. Certain it is, that many thousand alien votes were cast on one side or the other, and it was generally supposed that they were thrown into the popular scale. There is a section in the constitution of Illinois, which confers the right of suffrage on any man over twentyone years of age, who shall have resided in the state six months. And this extends alike to foreigners and native citizens. It strikes me as a deficiency in that constitution, and the effects were plainly visible in the late election. It was said and generally known that the Irish cast in that state alone over *five thousand* votes. These votes decided the election. Now it matters not on which side they voted — they plainly had the power to take the management of affairs from the hands of the large majority, by aiding the minority. Were they naturalized, or even settled, there would be no injustice. But of these five thousand voters, perhaps not five hundred of them will ever remain in the state — they will migrate to any spot where their labor may be demanded. It was, doubtless, a patriotic principle which prompted the framers of that constitution to make such a liberal provision, and had it been confined to native citizens of the United States, had been well enough, but it seems palpably evident, that there is no justice in permitting aliens, men who have not a farthing at stake, who have nothing to lose and no more to gain, to manage the affairs of those who are owners of their native soil, and whose whole interests are thus taken out of their hands and put beyond their own disposal. It is to be hoped that some future legislature will see the unjust operation of this law and so change its action, that none, at least, but such as have some stake at issue, shall have the right of suffrage.

It certainly exhibits a fearful state of things, when such men, not only aliens, but men of the greatest ignorance and the most degraded character, can be brought to bear with the same power on the decisions of our nation, as the same number of intelligent and patriotic citizens. It is a sad conviction which has *fastened* on the public mind by actual demonstration, that these hordes of aliens are at the entire disposal of each and every designing demagogue, in an overgrown and dominant party. Who can doubt that $20,000 would have BOUGHT every one of those 5000 votes? And what is $20,000, when office and reputation are at stake with a whole party—especially when that party is driven to desperation by having just played a ruinous game. I make no application of these hypotheses—I say not that such things have ever been done; but it seems clear that a most unholy perversion of the public funds might thus be made, and a tremendous support be thus *purchased* to a wicked and anti-national coalition:—and it does seem that this subject cannot be brought before the injured citizens of this populous and growing state—

which is becoming a very Hercules of the west and the Union, already casting aside its swaddling bands — too frequently, or too forcibly.

We reached Peru, which, at the lower stages of water is at the head waters of steamboat navigation, about dark. Peru is destined to become a large town. The great northern and southern railroad crosses the Illinois river at this junction. This will carry an immense travel through the place. It is likewise situated at the junction of the great canal which is now in a state of forwardness. This canal, which is to be on a grand scale and of sufficient size for small steamboats, connects the waters of Lake Michigan, and through them the waters of all the great chain of lakes, with the Mississippi, via the Illinois river. Thus bringing the whole southern and northern trade to a focus in this spot. Peru is said by many to be unhealthy, which the residents on the spot stoutly affirm to be highly libellous. Still I need further proof that it is not generally unhealthy on that river — not so sickly, however, that it need be shunned by those who are disposed and determined to take care of their health.

As we rode through the rich bottom which lies on the west bank for many miles up the river, and which is annually flooded with water, we could not but be struck with the wonderful growth of vegetation. The moon was at its full, and poured a flood of light upon the scene turning the night almost into day. The weeds and grass on either side of the way — the road was just wide enough for one carriage — was even with the top of the coach, shutting out our vision as effectually as if we had been encased within walls of stone. In these bottoms swarm such hosts of musquitoes as New England men never dreamed of. They fairly made it difficult to breathe, and silence was imposed from very fear of inhaling them with our breath. They were not to be endured; and hot as it was, we closed the curtains, and smoked them out with cigars—the only mode of riddance. However, we soon reached the high prairie, and were no more disturbed by this kind of vermin. Midnight found us at Ottawa, which, seen though it was, by moonlight and at the hour of midnight, presented a beautiful and even brisk appearance. We stopped to change horses at a new and splendid hotel, and took meanwhile a birds' eye view of the place. This is the head of steamboat navigation at high water, and can always be reached with boats of the smaller class. We noticed a large block of brick buildings, three stories high nearly finished, and many others in every stage of advancement. This is a very thriving place and has been built up with a magic that can but astonish any one.

We were awakened at daylight from a refreshing slumber—do not fancy, gentle reader, that because you cannot sleep sweetly on your beds of down, that a stage coach on a western prairie is no place to invite successfully the drowsy god, for it is a great mistake. Do you ask for proof? Go, as I did, ride three hundred miles in heat such as you little wot of, on a bare axletree, with no other spring beneath you but the earth and solid white oak and iron. Then make one of a corps of engineers, and tramp for eight or ten consecutive days, over burning prairies, through bogs and fens and tangled grass, through wood and dale—then if you would not sleep in a western stage coach, you will ask for proof in vain. Soundly and sweetly did *I* sleep, until, as I was saying, we were aroused from our slumber at daylight, by the falling of one of our horses, which was thoroughly "done up" and unfit to proceed further. So our coachee—a mere boy and as unfit to have care of even the miserable hacks which dragged us along at the rate of three miles per hour, as a tinker the care of the human system—turned him loose, and proceeded to our next relay with his team of three, which could not be induced to exceed the pace of a smart snail.

We reached the beautiful town of Juliet a little before noon, and had a good opportunity of seeing the wonders of the place. For miles before we reached Juliet, the limestone formation projected to the surface of the ground, which was strewed over with the broken fragments of the rock. I noticed also, an unusual number of *boulders* scattered all around. This is the height of land between the lake and the river in the line of the canal, and the valley of the Des Plaines river. It is twenty-five feet only, above the water level at Peru, and consequently the whole line of canal of one hundred and seventy miles will require but two locks each of thirteen feet; and each in this place. Here appears to have formerly been the most formidable barrier to the descent of the waters of the great lakes, and here seems to be abundant evidence that at some very remote period the waters broke over this bound, and carrying away all the earth left the naked rock nearly as we find it. The road along the channel thus made by the waters lies upon a ridge of limestone twenty feet above the level of the valley, and from fifty to two hundred feet in width, and for a mile or two in length. The surface of the road is very much like that of a roughly paved street. Paralell to this road and near the town there is a beautiful and very regular mound of solid limestone covered with a thin coat of soil. It is half a mile in length, fifty feet high, and nearly, as I should judge, three hundred feet wide at the base. The mound is as regularly formed as if it had been made by hand, and this has led many to the hasty conclusion that it was indeed the result of manual effort. But a moment's examination where the mound has been broken will show the regular layers of limestone just as they were placed by the great Architect.

Juliet possesses many advantages, which, in spite of the rugged nature of the soil in the immediate neighborhood, must cause it to increase most rapidly. Manufacturing is already introduced, and the vast amount of building material, will greatly aid in building up the place. Most beautiful quarries of limestone — a coarse white marble — lie beneath the immediate soil. I saw a large number of huge and beautiful blocks just quarried, and which were intended for the locks on the canal. I noticed several rich blocks of stores and dwelling houses built with the rough limestone which gave a very business like air to the place. Besides, Juliet is as delightfully situated as any town I saw at the west. We reached Chicago late in the afternoon, quite willing to exchange our dusty stage-coach for a berth on board one of the capacious lake boats.

I was very agreeably disappointed in Chicago. It is true that it lies on a dead level, and but a few feet above the waters of the lake on whose banks it is situated. But it is as regularly laid out as the indentations of the lake and river would permit, and there is a taste manifested in the buildings which might be profitably imitated in other western cities. The country around Chicago for many miles is a dead level prairie, doubtless once the bottom of the lake. This prairie is often completely inundated in the spring, and the travelling exceedingly bad nearly the year round. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, Chicago has grown up into its present condition—the largest town in Illinois—in an unprecedented manner. From a dirty village of twenty hamlets it has in four years grown into a large, handsome, city; where a vast amount of business is done, and every day increasing. Situated as it is at the western end of the lake, and the upper terminus of the great canal, it can but thrive and continue to outstrip its ambitious neighbors.

I spent one day in Chicago, and had a fair opportunity of examining it minutely. We found two steamboats bound through the lakes to Buffalo, between which existed a spirited competition, the captain of each offering to carry some dozen of us lower a great deal than the other. The regular fare is twenty dollars. We engaged on board the New England for fifteen dollars, although the other boat offered to carry us for ten. We preferred our boat, however, and had no occasion to regret it afterward, as she proved to be, though rather slow, a very safe and comfortable sea-boat.

We reached Michigan city in the middle of the afternoon, but could not get within a mile of it except by our yawl. Having freight to deliver, we were obliged to send it ashore in a scow. I had heard much of this place, and was exceedingly disappointed in it. It can but prove a splendid failure. We left the place just before dusk, and in two hours after we come to the mouth of a small creek, where we wooded. We reached St. Josephs, by daylight and while the boat was taking in wood we took a ramble on shore. After the luxury of a bath in the limpid waters of the lake, we strolled through the town, which is beautifully built on the bold and high shore of the lake. It is a thriving place, and destined to be a large town, having a vast back country to sustain it.

At five o'clock, P. M. next day, we entered

Mauitou Bay, in one of the smaller islands of that name. Mauitou signifies God, in the Indian tongue, and the tradition is that the Indian's evil spirit, or devil, resided here. The bay is more beautiful than any thing else of the kind I ever saw. It is three miles broad, in the form of a crescent, and is sheltered at its mouth by the great Mauitou island. It will afford some idea of the grand size of these lakes, when I say that in this bay of this lesser island, the combined navies of America and England might ride at anchor in perfect safety and convenience. The water near shore is very bold and clear as crystal, and a seventyfour might easily anchor within half her length of the shore. The shore is lined with limestone pebbles of a small size, and presents one of the clearest and most beautiful beaches I ever beheld. It was perfectly enchanting and irresistible, and the boat had not been moored ten minutes before the whole body of passengers were scattered over the beach picking up stones and shells, and bursting into constant exclamations of delight.

This evening was as calm, mild and delightful as poet ever wrote of and afforded a fine contrast to the evening previous, in which we encountered a terriffic thunderstorm. I was delighted with the chance afforded, to witness a storm on the lake. These storms are often dangerous, and come up so suddenly as mock all preparation. We luckily entered the mouth of the Grand river just as the storm struck us. We lay there in perfect peace, and looked out upon the troubled waters of the lake as they were illumed by the almost incessant flashes of lightning, which were more various and beautiful than any similar exhibition I had ever witnessed. Terrific peals of thunder broke in rapid succession over our heads, and the wind howled through our rigging and the trees on shore as if it would annihilate us.

We passed through the straits of Michilimacinac, just after daylight, which are so wide as scarcely to admit of seeing one shore from the other. Here we took leave of the beautiful Michigan, and plunged into the dark waters of the turbulent Huron. We passed a couple of hours at Mackinaw, a place of some commerce, and a very important military point in reference to these lakes. We ran up the steep hill to the fort, now deserted and still as a tomb, and from a point in the bastion had a most enchanting view of the lakes and neighboring islands.

We had feasted, in anticipation, for days, on the trout and white-fish of this place, so famous everywhere; nor were we disappointed. Several fine trout, weighing each fifteen or twenty pounds, were purchased, and were served for a day or two, at dinner and breakfast, in fine style.

Our sail down the lake was a flight. We had a perfect gale astern, and spreading all our canvass, and putting on all steam, we ran the whole length of Huron in less than a day, a distance of nearly three hundred miles. We reached Detroit before dark next day, and waited there for freight and passengers, until ten o'clock next morning.

Detroit is, in all its peculiar characteristics, an eastern city. It was peopled and built up by eastern men, in eastern style, and the habits of the east prevail above those of the west. It is a growing place, and destined to become one of the largest of western cities. It will be an exceedingly important station, in case of any difficulties arising between our nation and the Canadas. We here first perceived the hostile spirit which, I am sorry to say, prevails all along the Canadian line of our frontier.

Detroit lies on the St. Clair river, just at the foot of the lake of the same name. It is but a mile across the river to the Canadian shore, and although the better informed and more intelligent do all they can to cultivate and establish good feelings, the thoughtless and designing are constantly seeking and obtaining opportunities to stir up and increase the feud already existing between the two shores.

At the mouth of the St. Clair river, we passed Amherstburgh, where there is a fort and a body of troops stationed. These were under review as we passed, and presented a very imposing appearance, their scarlet uniform and brilliant weapons glancing and flashing in the sunlight. There was an evident disposition on board our boat, to insult them, but it was utterly frowned down by the majority. Before noon, we passed the three sisters, a *line* of three islands—they are not grouped—at the northern part of Lake Erie. We sailed directly over the battle ground of the gallant Perry, whose brilliant victory added real glory to the American arms in the late war. We passed the brig "Queen Charlotte," which was among the trophies of that engagement. She is a neat, trim craft, and nearly the sole survivor, as I was told, of that bloody affray. *Sic transit, etc.*

We made but a short stay at Cleaveland, but enough to show us the peculiar beauty and advantages of the place, which, in point of commercial location, is scarcely exceeded by Buffalo. We reached Buffalo, in a soaking rain, at day-light, just one week after leaving Chicago, having traversed nearly twelve hundred miles of fresh water in one boat!

Our stay at the growing town of Buffalo, was so short, that I had not time to take more than a flying view of the place. Coming as we did from the west, where a tolerable tavern is a god-send, we were fully prepared to enjoy the luxuries of a Buffalo hotel, surpassed, as the Buffalo hotels are, by no others in the United States. They are perfect palaces, and the best of them will not suffer a whit by being put in comparison with the Astor and Tremont houses.

We took the railroad for Niagara, and were trolled over that rascally road in shabby cars, by *horse power*, THE locomotive being out of repair. We reached the Cataract House, on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and had time, previous to dinner, just to catch a glimpse of the falls.

I am not going to describe these tremendous and most glorious manifestations of Him, "in whose hand are all the corners of the earth." This wonder of Nature has been too often described to need a repetition of it in this humble volume, even did I not feel that the subject would mock my attempt. I shall merely give some of my "impressions" while on that hallowed spot—a spot where the Almighty seems to have been pleased to produce a concentration of the awful, grand, and beautiful. In no spot are to be found, so happily blended, opposing features. In the midst of a flat and level country, lies this stupendous cataract, in order to form which, the channel of the river below the falls has been torn out of the solid rock, for miles, to the depth of from 160 to 300 feet, and a quarter of a mile in breadth. Here, too, is found the quiet repose, hushed by the muffled roar of the falling sea of waters, in the very midst of the wild scene, and on the very verge of the precipice over which they take their frightful leap. Here dwells the bow of promise, holding perpetual sway over the mad torrent—like the benignant smile of peace, sanctifying the desolations of the human heart. But I have not time to multiply tropes.

I heard much of the disappointment of visitors—the falls were not so *grand* as they had been led to expect. *Such* persons would have been disappointed, had they found, instead of the actual "miracle of Omnipotence," a fall, from the moon, of all the waters of the ocean! *I*, too, was disappointed—*most happily*. I shall never, never forget the first impression. I took my course from the hotel—and I advise every one who visits them for the first time, on the American side, to do the same,—direct to the stairway which leads to the foot of the falls on the American side. To the roar of the mighty flood I could not close my ear, but I obstinately shut my eyes against all lesser views, determined to receive my first impressions from some prominent point. It is hard work to do so. Oh, how I longed, yet dreaded, to look abroad while on that way, which seemed an hundred times as long as it really was! but I kept my eye perversely bent upon my very feet, not catching a glimpse, until the full view opened upon my astonished vision. And *such* a vision! I see even now—I ever shall see it,—that awful torrent, just leaping from its fearful height, as if it were reluctantly forced therefrom, into the boiling abyss, which danced in very madness of joy to embrace it. Awful and beautiful! How sublime were the impressions of that first half-hour, and which all my after-wonderings and delight could not weaken, and which I devoutly pray may never be absent from my soul, whenever my thoughts turn to Thee, great wonder and glory of His hand who bade thee roll and bow thus in homage to His will!

I visited all the famous points of this everywhere imposing scene, and everywhere was filled with new wonder and delight; but at every point, I involuntarily returned to my first impressions, as to my first love, as the most beautiful and imposing. Not even my pilgrimage to "Termination rock," behind the sheet of waters, so eloquently and graphically described by Miss Martineau, made such impression as the first act in the scene. I advise every one to go behind the sheet, and take his "certificate" from the polite Mr Starkie, who furnishes the guide. For several reasons I would advise every visitor to put his foot on "Termination rock." First, it is the *fashion*—others, great and beautiful, lad and lass, have been there. Secondly, it affords a rare shower-bath—which every dusty traveller requires,—not to speak of the sport of equipping. Thirdly, he will not have to take "impressions" second-handed—surely they can never be *conveyed*. Fourthly, because—but these are enough—go, reader, to the chaotic spot, or go not to Niagara!

Not the least interesting part of the visit is the passage of the river across the ferry, "with the grim ferryman" which travellers "write of." The staunch boat dances like an egg-shell over the boiling flood, and requires a strong and steady arm to keep it free from the rocks which project everywhere above the surface, and to prevent its being swept down the rushing current. Such an arm had our oarsman—a stout, handsome, black fellow, who seemed to be formed and designed for this very purpose. I have seldom seen a finer specimen of bone and muscle, and I hope Miss Martineau's enjoyment in the study of his face—as fine an African specimen as I ever beheld—a very Othello—was as great as mine.

The view from the Canadian bank amply repaid us for our toilsome ascent up the winding pathway leading thereto from the ferry. We were reminded of our alien position on being requested, by a British sentry, to record our names both on reaching and leaving the Canadian shore. After admiring the falls from Table rock, and all other interesting points, we clambered up to the Heights, and witnessed the fine encampment of British troops stationed there. We were treated with perfect civility, and regaled with some excellent music from the well-disciplined band belonging to the regiment. By the time we had re-crossed this modern Styx, and ascended, for the twentieth time that day, the precipitous bank, we were glad to eat our supper and seek our beds.

From the falls there is a railroad to Lockport, where passengers are transferred to the canal-boats, and, passing on through Rochester, Syracuse, etc., reach Utica on the morning of the third day, in season to take the cars for Albany. Another route is, by railroad or stage to Lewiston, thence to Oswego, via Lake Ontario, in steamboat, and thence by stage to Utica, seventyfive miles. We were beset by the agents of each line, who had a real battle—of words—in our presence. Some of our party were in a *great hurry* to get on, and decided to go via Rochester, etc. The agent for the other route pledged his word that we might spend a whole day more at the falls, and he would still deliver us in Utica *twelve hours* in advance of those who had decided for the other route, and in season to take the night train, that we might reach Albany in time for the morning boat for New York. So I concluded, in company with my travelling companion, once more to put my faith in a "stage agent," albeit I had so often been *gulled* by them. One other inducement was, that the fare should be several dollars less.

We took the *stage* for Lewiston, in preference to the railroad. Let every lover of the wild and beautiful do so. The driver was a very accommodating fellow, and drove us to the "whirlpool" and "devil's hole," at each of which places he permitted us to dismount and take a brief survey, and we reached the boat at the same time with the cars. This is owing to the roundabout route of the railroad, for we left Niagara at the same hour. The fare is the same, and the traveller has a fine view of all the interesting points on that wild and matchless river. I would advise all visitors at the falls to take this route.

Our boat pushed off late in the afternoon, and gave us a fine opportunity to view the towns and forts on either shore, as we passed them in rapid succession. In our rear rose the wild heights so memorable for the fall of General Brock, whose monument, of beautiful proportions, towered above every object and stood in bold relief against the darkening sky. On our left was the small town of Lewiston, with its sentry "walking his lonely round" with shouldered musket, and as fierce a look of defiance as the pacific state of the times would permit. Before us opened, in perfect beauty, the broad waters of the unruffled lake, reflecting aslant the rays of the setting sun, and appearing *almost* a sea of fire. A band of music on board, served to give life and variety to the scene, and the evening closed in as one would wish to die, calm and glorious as an angel's coming or a saint's departure.

We entered the snug little harbor of Oswego a little after sunrise, with banners waving, and the band playing "The Campbells are coming." This is one of those beautiful and thriving towns which have grown up by magic in the state of New

York, since the impulse imparted to her commerce and manufactures by the great father of that state, the illustrious De Witt Clinton, whose name ought to be engraven on every lock of her endless canals, and every milestone on her railroads. After a substantial breakfast, served in Boston style by a Boston host, and discussed in true style by a Boston company, we packed into our "Troy coach," and set off in a *buzz*, which augured well for the day's result. We had seventyfive miles of road before us, to be despatched before nine in the evening—and *such* a road—and this commencement put us in fine spirits, and served to banish in part our fears that we should not accomplish the predictions of our "lying agent." *Nor did we.* Recent rains had rendered the bad roads worse, and we encountered crabbed drivers, who, I believe in my heart, delayed us *intentionally*, and rejoiced in our discomfiture. However, we reached Utica in safety, sometime before midnight, and had *eight* hours sweet repose before our friends, who had left Niagara twentyfour hours in advance of us, reached the city.

After all, I would recommend the route I came. Certainly a day and a half is clearly gained, and several dollars in expense, not to count a fine night's rest in the boat, and another at Utica. The seventyfive miles of road is bad enough, in all conscience, but it is only one day's ride, and can very well be borne. Indeed it is preferable to canal riding at any rate. And generally the stage reaches in season for the *evening* train in which passengers can go on directly to Albany. I attribute our failure altogether to the surliness and self-importance of several of the drivers, who deserve to be turned out of employment.

I was astonished with the magnitude of Utica, as well as other inland towns of the "empire state." Its wide and cleanly streets, and business-like blocks of stores, give it a tidy and thrifty aspect, and augur a general prosperity.

Our ride through the narrow and picturesque valley of the Mohawk, over the Utica and Schenectady railroad, was a very pleasant and rapid one, and we entered Albany in season to take the evening boat and have some hours to spare. Never before have I been carried through the water as the Swallow steamer carried me. She is most appropriately named; she is the swiftest of boats. We were snugly moored to the steamboat pier, in New York, before day-light. At four o'clock, P. M., we entered that fine sound boat, the Massachusetts, and, at an early hour next morning, I set foot once more on New England soil. We were whirled over the railroad to Boston, in a short space of time, and I found myself once more in the bosom of my family. I have run thus rapidly over the journey home, because it has so often been described, and I could not find it in my heart to write about that which is perfectly familiar to every schoolboy.

IN CONCLUSION to my labors, in bringing this little book before the public, I have a few general reflections to utter, which may serve to illustrate my purpose and expectation. I have attempted this task, heaven knows, not from a vain desire to appear before the public as an author, for I am well aware of the extremely loose manner in which this work has been thrown together. Most of it was written while "on the wing" of travel, and the pressure of other duties have entirely prevented such revision as I should have been glad to bestow upon it. But I have written for two objects:

First, to gratify a numerous circle of friends, who have closely besieged me with questions innumerable about that land of promise which I have explored, and who take a deep interest in all that pertains thereto, and whom I can best and most easily gratify by this method. And secondly, because such crude and false notions of the west have attained in New England, that a candid, fair exposition of that country was greatly demanded. Already has the tide of immigration passed into "Illinois and the west," in such immense streams as to astonish him who beholds it; and that tide is destined to swell to an almost indefinite extent. The next year (1839) will probably exhibit such an immigration as no one year before has ever exhibited. Why should it not? There are tens of thousands in the thickly peopled portions of the United States, who, although they may be able to gain a bare subsistence, must do it with much toil and sacrifice, and be perpetually harassed with the reflection that should sickness overtake them, or, at last, when old age must, they and theirs, for whom they live alone, must suffer and come for support upon the cold charity of the world, or the hard pittance of the pauper. Immigration is, to him, what it was to the Israelitish brickmakers in Egypt—a certain good for an uncertain one, a competence for subsistence, a prospect of plenty for a penurious old age.

There are other multitudes who have inherited a delicate constitution, and in whom the incipient seeds of death are early fanned into vigorous and fatal action by the bleak east winds of New England. Unless they have protracted beyond all hope their stay in the, to them, deadly climate of the north, the latitude of the south-western states is the very one where these seeds will not be likely to germinate. I have known many, whose delicate state of health indicated incipient consumption, who, upon removing to Illinois, have become hearty and robust, and every pulmonary symptom has long since disappeared. To such I would say, try it. Tarry not in these bleak latitudes until it is too late, as thousands do, and, when all hope is abandoned, vainly expect relief from the milder influences of lower latitudes. Let the very first and repeated symptoms of pulmonary attack be the sounding note of your departure. The prospect of life and health are multiplied a thousand times in the removal.

Besides these, there are many farmers who have sons growing up around them, whom they have dedicated to the toilsome and honorable occupation they have themselves pursued. They are unable to apportion them at the north, where, poor as the soil is, it bears an exorbitant price. They must either be turned out from home early in life, and taken from all the watchful care so necessary to their youth, or, left a burden upon the household until of age, they must then be turned out upon the world, and trust to the winds and waves of fortune, which may waft them on to competency and virtue, and which may bear them away to utter and hopeless poverty and irreclaimable vice. To such an one the west holds out the most powerful inducements. If he can dispose of his farm at a fair price, he can appropriate it to the greatest possible advantage. He can procure land enough to employ all his boys, and that to the greatest profit, and when they shall become men, he can apportion and settle them all around him, where, with industry and good conduct, they may attain to opulence and respect.

Then there is the mechanic—whose only stock in trade is his chest of tools and his skill,—he can find no better place than the west to "set up for himself." Carpenters, joiners, mill-wrights, brick-layers, stone-masons, blacksmiths, painters, shoe-makers, hatters, tailors, and all those whose labor is requisite in building up a new country—these, each and every, can do *well* at the west; can do better, doubtless, than to remain at the east, where every trade is crowded.

Beside these, there are the merchant, the lawyer, the physician, and the schoolmaster, who will find an ample field for their powers—which are cramped, it may be, where they are—and with a good prospect of a fair and generous remuneration.

Illinois is destined to be a great state—great in her political and moral influence, as well as in her physical resources. It is to be made thus through foreign influence—the influence of immigration. It is altogether a mistake, which too many entertain, that the west is filled up with mere renegadoes and speculators—men whose fortunes have failed them in the east, with all hope of reparation; or whose enormities have exiled them from the moral community of New England. Bad men there are, and speculators, but the majority of the population is made up of men—young men—of great enterprise and business tact, who, while they are laboring for their own emolument, are doing somewhat, and not a little, for the institutions of their adopted country, and the permanence of social virtues in the society they help to compose. A thriftless man—one who has not the ambition to help himself at home,—will not seek the west, because it requires too much enterprise to do so. Or, if he goes there, finding labor and sagacity as necessary there as elsewhere, he becomes disgusted, and returns again to his old home, where he will stand a much fairer chance to succeed in idleness and thriftlessness.

What I have uttered in the foregoing pages, has no claim to infallibility. It is the calm conclusion of a mind alive to a desire to utter truth in a sober guise, and if I shall have influenced any one to his good I shall be abundantly rewarded in the efforts I have put forth.

APPENDIX.

Routes—Conveyances—Prices—Hints—Note.

To one who has determined to visit the west, a few directions, as to the best routes, etc., will prove a valuable desideratum. When the Ohio river is up, I would recommend, to persons going on with families, the route via Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, etc. Where there are no children, I should recommend the route from Philadelphia via Baltimore, and over the National Road by stage to Wheeling on the Ohio river.

When the Ohio river is low, a better route would be from New York to Albany, thence to Utica, and by stage to Oswego, by boat up the Ontario to Lewiston and Buffalo, and through the lakes to Chicago. It will be a boisterous route after the middle of October, and somewhat dangerous.

One valuable hint to travellers is, to make one trunk answer for the whole luggage, and that as *small* as possible. Take as few things as can be got along with, and thus save much real vexation, loss of time, and money.

The following table I have carefully collated from the published tables of various guide books and maps, and have taken the liberty to correct several important errors which have occurred therein.

From New York to Philadelphia, via steamboat and railroad, fare $3 and $4, meals extra. From Philadelphia to Pittsburg, via railroad and canal, fare $12, meals extra. From Pittsburg to St. Louis or Alton, via Ohio and Mississippi rivers, fare $20, or $25, meals included. From St. Louis or Alton, via Illinois river, to Peoria, $5, meals included. Through, from Boston to Pittsburg, in six days; Cincinnati, eight days; St. Louis or Alton, twelve to fourteen days. A single person, without extra baggage, can get from Boston to St. Louis for about $50. It cost me $49. This covers all necessary expenses; fares, tavern bills, meals, porterage, hack hire, etc. etc.

From New York to Albany, via Hudson river, fare $3, meals extra. From Albany to Utica, via railroad, $4, meals extra. From Utica to Oswego, stage, fare $3, meals extra. From Oswego to Lewiston, via Lake Ontario, fare $4, meals included. From Lewiston to Buffalo, railroad, fare $1,50. From Buffalo to Chicago, via the lakes, fare from $15 to $25, meals included. From Chicago to Peoria, via Ottawa and Peru, stage and steamboat, fare $10, meals extra. Again, from Utica, via canal and railroad to Buffalo, through Syracuse, Rochester, Lockport, etc., fare from $10 to $12, including meals. In the winter, from Buffalo, by stage, to Chicago, fare about $50, exclusive of meals.

Individuals who wish to travel through the interior of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, etc., will find that the most convenient, sure, economical, and independent mode is on horseback. Their expenses will be from seventyfive cents to one dollar fifty cents per day, and they can always consult their own convenience and pleasure as to time and place.

Stage fare is usually six cents per mile, in the West. Meals, at stage-houses, are thirtyseven and a half to fifty cents.

Those wishing to go west in as economical a manner as possible, can get there for about half the cost of the above enumerated fares. The forward car in all the trains of railroad travelling, is half price. A deck passage on all boats may be secured on exceedingly easy terms. By the payment of four, five, or six dollars, and occasional aid in "wooding up" at the stopping places, a man may get from Pittsburg to St. Louis, and at this rate elsewhere. By putting in provisions at the large towns and taking a deck passage, and the cheap (transportation) line between Philadelphia and Pittsburg, I have known individuals go from Boston to St. Louis at a cost of not more than $18.

"The deck for such passengers is usually in the midship, forward of the engine, and is protected from the weather. Passengers furnish their own provisions and bedding. They often take their meals at the cabin table, with the boat hands, and pay twentyfive cents a meal. Thousands pass up and down the river as deck passengers, especially emigrating families, who have their bedding, provisions, and cooking utensils on board.

Immigrants and travellers will find it to their interest always to be a little skeptical relative to statements of stage, steam and canal-boat agents; to make some allowance in their own calculations for delays, difficulties, and expenses; and above all, to *feel* perfectly patient and in good humor with themselves, the officers, company, and the world, even if they do not move quite as rapidly, and fare quite as well as they desire."

NOTE.—My manuscript has so far exceeded my calculations, that I am obliged to condense the Appendix to a much smaller compass than I at first intended. But a small edition of the book is issued, and should its sale so far afford evidence of its requirement, another edition will be speedily issued, with such emendations and additions as may make it a sure and full text-book, to all persons interested in the growth of the west.